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# The American **RECORD GUIDE**



JULY, 1952 - VOL. 18, No. 11



Edited by

**Peter Hugh Reed**

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# The American RECORD GUIDE

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JULY, 1952 Vol. XVIII, No. 11

formerly

The American Music Lover

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## Hands Across The Seas

### Editorial Notes

▲MUCH of the palaver behind scenes in the record world, which had old combines busting up for good and all, was exploded this past month in New York. All the smouldering smoke about RCA Victor and His Master's Voice dissolving affiliations was entirely rumor. We know now that H.M.V. is going to issue long-playing discs as well as 45-rpm ones. Some of us have been anticipating the sunrise in a joint U.S.A.-British combine, and the new deal between RCA Victor and H.M.V. certainly has all of that rosy glow to it which looks like it is going to work advantageously two ways — for music listeners in this country as well as in England.

On the hottest day of the year, Wednesday June 25, RCA Victor assembled the New York critics in the Pine Room of the Hotel Warwick for a tasty luncheon and sundry drinks. With air-conditioning, everybody was happy, and Mr. George Marek, director of artists and repertoire of RCA Victor's Record Department, beamed from the head table as host of the occasion. One could feel that Mr. Marek was going to make an announcement which pleased him greatly; there was an aura of elative satisfaction about him.

After some preliminaries, Mr. Marek announced that the first of a new series of LP and 45-rpm recordings, made by The Gramophone Co., Ltd., of England, would be issued in July. Hereafter, every six months a similar list would be added to Victor's regular domestic output. Also, he said, the H.M.V. LP recordings issued in England, beginning in the fall, would be

made available on import to all domestic dealers.

Representing The Gramophone Co., Ltd., was its artists and repertoire director Mr. J. David Bicknell. He explained that his company's newest move is the result of a long-range plan initiated more than three years ago to broaden The Gramophone Company's representation in the American market. As Mr. Marek pointed out this new arrangement will make available to American listeners the recordings of many famous artists, most of them well known to concert audiences in this country.

The initial release of H.M.V. recordings being pressed in this country, with H.M.V. labels, consists of 20 LP discs which we hope to report on more fully in the near future. Mr. Bicknell emphasized that, while the entire classical catalogue of The Gramophone Co. will be drawn upon for future releases, the paramount considerations in the choice of repertoire will be the artists, and the technical quality of the master recordings. On the strength of this statement, there should materialize in the next year a great many fine English-made recordings that domestic listeners have long hoped to acquire on LP. Perhaps The Gramophone Co. will find it feasible to instigate a "Treasury" series, similar to what RCA Victor did. This would permit the re-release of many worthwhile recordings from times past which, let us hope, would include the "Society" issues.

The complete list of titles in the new-

speed H.M.V. release are: Sibelius' *Symphony No. 7*, and Rubbra's *Symphony No. 5* by the Hallé Orchestra conducted by Sir John Barbirolli; Holst's *The Planets* by the BBC Symphony conducted by Sir Adrian Boult; Tchaikovsky's *Symphony No. 5* by the La Scala Orchestra conducted by Guido Cantelli; Debussy's *Preludes, Book I* and Schumann's *Kinderszenen* by Alfred Cortot; Nielson's *Symphony No. 4* by Danish State Radio Orchestra conducted by Launy Grøndahl; Mozart's *Piano Concerto No. 25, K. 503* by Edwin Fischer and the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips; Bach's *Concerto in C* by Edwin Fischer, Ronald Smith and Denis Matthews with Philharmonia Orchestra; Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* with Kirsten Flagstad, Elisabeth Schwartzkopf and other soloists; Mozart's *Symphony in G minor, K. 550* and Brahms' *Variations on a Theme of Haydn* by Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwaengler; Tchaikovsky's *Symphony No. 4* and Beethoven's *Symphony No. 7*; Schubert's *Symphony No. 8* ("Unfinished"), Nicolai's *Merry Wives' Overture*, Weber's *Oberon Overture*, and Schubert's *Rosamunde Ballet Music* — all by Furtwaengler; Highlights from Mozart's *Idomeneo* by soloists of the Glyndebourne Festival directed by the late Fritz Busch; Franck's *Symphonic Variations* by Moura Lympany, Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari and Schumann's *Etudes Symphoniques* by Miss Lympany; Paganini's *Concerto No. 2* and Vieuxtemps'

*Concerto No. 4* by Yehudi Menuhin and the Philharmonia Orchestra; Bach's six *Sonatas for Violin and Piano* by Yehudi Menuhin and Louis Kentner; Dvorak's *Fourth Symphony* by the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Rafael Kaelik; Mozart's *Concertos Nos. 20 and 24* by Artur Schnabel and the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Süsskind.

## Vivaldi's "LaCetra"

**VIVALDI: *La Cetra* (The Lyre) — Twelve Concertos for Violin and String Orchestra, Op. 9; Louis Kaufman** (soloist) leading the String Ensemble of the **Orchestre National, Paris**, with **Antoine Geoffrey-Déchaume** at the harpsichord. Concert Hall LP set 1134, 2 discs, \$11.90.

▲THE RECORDING, made in France, has liveness and overall good balance though the harpsichord is somewhat submerged in the ensemble. Kaufman proves himself thoroughly capable in the duo role of soloist and conductor. The performances are live, stylistically expressive and rhythmically alert. These concertos, among the finest works of Vivaldi on records, anticipate in many details the figuration devices for the solo violin which were adopted by later-day composers. There is not a dull moment in any of them,

(Continued on page 355)

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Trying to tune-in America on short-wave, in Italy

## Toscanini and Reproduced Music

X  
by Peter Hugh Reed

**T**OSCANINI has recorded many great works in the past fifteen years which for reasons of his own he has declined to have released — among them Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* and *Missa Solemnis*. It is therefore gratifying to know that he recently approved performances of the *Second* and *Ninth Symphonies* of Beethoven, both of which are scheduled for release in the fall by RCA Victor. With these, Toscanini's performances of all nine of the Beethoven symphonies will at long last be available on records. He has also re-recorded the *Fourth* and *Sixth Symphonies* and it is rumored that he may re-do some of the others.

Among the works recorded and approved this past spring by the noted conductor, before his trip to Italy, are Beethoven's *Septet*; Brahms' *First, Second and Fourth Symphonies*; Elgar's *Enigma Variations*; Prokofieff's *Classical Symphony*; Strauss' *Tod und Verklarung*; Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite*; Weber's Overture to *Euryanthe* and *Invitation to the Dance*; Wagner's *Ride of the Valkyries*, the Preludes to Acts I and III of *Lohengrin*,

and the Prelude to Act III of *Die Meistersinger*. The broadcast performance of Verdi's *Otello* is also slated for future release.

It has long been contended that Toscanini is adverse to recording. This statement is not without foundation. In the past, one of the conductor's greatest aversions in recording was the necessity of breaks in the continuity of long works. These were disturbing to his keenly concentrative thought. Too, he has never been able to accustom himself to the lights used for signaling during the recording. He finds that they create a certain amount of nervous tension, and he complains that he does not operate as a machine. In the days before high fidelity, another aversion was the sacrifice of dynamic qualities, especially those delicately nuanced *pianissimi* for which he is justly famed in the concert hall.

RCA Victor engineers deserve credit in their efforts to approximate the dynamic characteristics demanded by the Maestro, and the now famous recording of Beethoven's *Seventh Symphony* made in 1936

(Victor set 317) was assuredly an amazingly realistic engineering achievement for its time. The advent of tape has altered some of Toscanini's distaste toward recording, especially the former breaks in continuity. But the signal lights, important in the timing element, he still finds annoying. It is doubtful if recording will ever completely satisfy the Maestro's exacting ear for tonal purity and nuance.

To appreciate this conductor's viewpoint on music in reproduction, it is necessary to understand his undeviated absorption with music. Those close to him will tell you that he "suffers music at all times." His search for and efforts to obtain perfection in performance find him hypercritical about details that others might ignore. Actually, his world of musical sounds can best be described as a "dream world" of unexcelled or unrealizable tonal purity and perfection. Always the actual sounds evoked from the orchestra have been in conflict with the idealistic qualities of his inner world. Music has never been a game with him, rather a serious artistic endeavor — a striving for tonal impeccability the existence of which remains problematical.

### *An Uncompromising Idealist*

Toscanini does not qualify as a demigod. Rather he might be termed an uncompromising idealist, who probably does not admit to himself that any ideal, much less his own, is only capable of existence in thought. That is why in his artistry there has always been an unsparing concentration of effort — why, as the late Lawrence Gilman once said, "he has that unshakable faith of the rare artist in the sufficient rewardingness of the last full measure of devotion that he brings to his task of re-creation." For Toscanini, there are "no minor points in connection with a work of art." In his pursuit of artistic endeavor, he might concede with Michelangelo that "trifles make perfection, and perfection is no trifle."

Much of Toscanini's anguish in life has been engendered by music because he lives his art desperately. Always self-critical, he often blames himself uncondi-

tionally for things beyond his control. He is never completely satisfied with any performance and always believes he can improve this or that passage. It is not generally known that he is a great admirer of many other conductors and has often attended their rehearsals. For example, whenever Ansermet and Cantelli conducted NBC Symphony concerts he was in constant attendance at their rehearsals. His evaluation of the work of others has prompted his refusal to sanction the release of a performance of his own. For example, he refused to permit an earlier version of Tchaikovsky's *Sixth Symphony*, which he made, to be issued because he considered the interpretation of the third movement by another famous conductor better than his own.

### *Not Mechanically Minded*

His attitude toward the phonograph is both understandable and justifiable. In the first place, he does not understand the limitations of the machine. He has never been mechanically minded. As a boy, he never learned to ride a bicycle, and has never driven an automobile. He has the most sensitive and exacting hearing — deviations of pitch of an eighth of a tone are immediately perceptible to him. The pitch inaccuracy in earlier recordings and of earlier motors were immediately noticeable to him. He could not understand that others would not be aware of a fraction of a tone difference between sides in a symphonic recording. His hearing is so acute that he can recognize the "peaking" of any instrument, or section of overtones, in reproduction. From the beginning he has contended that music in reproduction, even on the best equipment, does not sound as in reality. The characteristics of many instruments vary — often the flute sounds like the violin and vice-versa. The clarinet, he contends, is more prominent in the concert hall and the flute in recording.

Ever an indefatigable worker for balance, he has demanded passages for obscure instruments — like the second clarinet—to be clarified in a recording. He believes firmly that the machine can and should reproduce the sounds of all in-

struments as he hears them in the concert hall, and also achieve an equitable balance. His sensitive and acute hearing was demonstrated in a test planned by RCA Victor engineers in 1940. At this time a half-dozen reproducing systems with variations in frequency curves were arranged. The instant a change was effected in frequency response, Toscanini recognized it. "It was amazing," one engineer stated, "how he detected alterations in natural quality or exact definition. He definitely favored the more natural curve — what we engineers call 'flat' reproduction."

### Honors Tradition

Toscanini has never been interested in experiments with instruments or in changing the seating positions of the players, nor has he ever been concerned with how string players use their bows. Similarly, he has not been interested in extended range as a reproducing means in itself, though the increased range of dynamics and the reproduction of purer overtones in modern recording cannot fail to have pleased him. He does not think of advances in reproducing technique, for he takes the machine for granted as something which should be perfect. Even an automobile is regarded by him as infallible and he blames the driver if anything goes wrong.

From early childhood, Toscanini has *lived* music as keenly as any musician who ever existed. He retains at all times a clear mental picture of every score he performs, and never resorts to the printed page except in study or at points during rehearsals. Ever working for perfection in tonal sound since his nineteenth year, when he took up a baton for the first time to conduct a performance of *Aida* in Brazil, Toscanini has never thought of music in any other form than the "live" performance. In his humble home, as a child, there was no music box and he has never shown any interest in this forerunner of the phonograph which so many of his generation knew well. Though he knew the barrel organ well from boyhood upward, he never gave it a serious thought

— it was the recognized music-purveyor of the streets.

Walter Toscanini, the Maestro's son, tells us about the first phonograph which came into the Toscanini home. This was back in 1903-04. It was a gift from his father's good friend, Enrico Caruso, and the records which came with it were by the noted tenor. The machine, with its monstrous pink and gold horn (morning-glory pattern), was a delight to Walter and his sisters; they were thrilled with its sounds. But to Toscanini the quality of his friend's voice was badly distorted — the reproduction raucous and coarse. Around this time, the Maestro heard the



Toscanini with his children  
at Bayreuth in 1930

reproducing piano and dismissed it perfunctorily as not the real thing. Its lack of true dynamic qualities, and of nuances peculiar to the performing artist, displeased him. Even at this early period, he considered that the machine should be



perfect and was inclined to blame the artist for its shortcomings.

Today Toscanini listens to many of the old acoustic recordings of famous artists of the past, especially those with whom he worked in former years, but he contends that few of his recollections of the voices are recognizable from the records, no matter how well reproduced. A great admirer of Artur Nikisch (1855-1922), the renowned German conductor, Toscanini in recent years has acquired all of that conductor's acoustic recordings made shortly before World War I. In no way, he says, do these give a true idea of Nikisch's interpretative artistry and he wonders how the conductor sanctioned their release.

### *First Recordings*

Though Toscanini made acoustic recordings in 1921, it was not because he had changed his attitude toward recording. At this time, he was touring the United States with the famous La Scala Orchestra, with which he had long been associated. Inasmuch as funds were needed to defray costs of travel, he was prevailed upon by the management to make a series of records for the benefit of the orchestra's tour. With misgivings and subsequent regrets, he went to Camden and made a group of records in the old Church where all of the Victor Talking Machine Company's recordings were then made. In all, he made 18 single-faced selections which were released in the single-faced Red Seal classification, and coupled two years later.

In 1929, when he returned again to this country to conduct the New York Philharmonic Symphony, Toscanini consented to make his first electrical recordings — Haydn's *Symphony No. 101* (the "Clock") and Mozart's *Symphony No. 35* ("Haffner"). The income from royalties of these went to the Philharmonic Society. Both of these were widely acclaimed and now greatly valued souvenirs of the conductor's association with that orchestra.

An interesting story in connection with his earlier acoustic recordings was told by Josef Pasternack, then the musical director of Victor, and a close friend and admirer of

Toscanini. When the Maestro heard for the first time the sounds of his performances emerging from the old latticed chamber of the Victrola, he was horrified. At this period of orchestral recording technique, it was necessary to use bass clarinets to reinforce the cello section (double basses could not be employed in recording) to acquire the semblance of true bass, as the phonograph horn did not achieve true amplitude in low tones. Toscanini was completely intolerant of these compromises with true sounds and could not believe that others would not also be. In one of the recordings, Toscanini claimed a cellist was playing off pitch. This particular recording was the subject of much discussion. Over a weekend, Pasternack listened attentively to the offending record and discovered the true source of the off-pitch cello. It was Toscanini singing the melodic line along with the cellos. (Evidently, Toscanini did not realize that his singing, which might have been inaudible in the concert-hall, would be more noticeable in recordings.) His cherished memories of his earliest recording session, rather than any of the recordings, are first edition pocket scores of Beethoven's *First*, *Second* and *Fifth Symphonies* presented to him by Josef Pasternack.

### *The NBC Symphony*

It was inevitable that Toscanini should make recordings with the NBC Symphony, the orchestra especially assembled for him by the National Broadcasting System in the fall of 1937. If ever an idealistic venture was conceived for the American airways, this was it. In 1936, Toscanini had awowedly left this country for good. There were however two men among us in music who believed that he would return if the right enducement were provided. What better enducement than to offer the conductor an orchestra completely his own. It was a visionary venture, conceived by David Sarnoff, head of the Radio Corporation of America. The critic, Samuel Chotzinoff, was chosen to be the courier of good will. The latter's tact, understanding and sagacity undeniably "equipped him as ambassador extra-



ordinary in the successful accomplishment of a difficult task." The success of his pilgrimage to Italy and the subsequent achievement of Toscanini's forming of the orchestra, the equal of the best in this country, is now history. The first program, given on Christmas night of 1937, was heard by countless millions of listeners across-country. The NBC is said to have received nearly 50,000 requests for tickets to the broadcast studio for that first concert.

### *Toscanini and Studio 8-H*

Studio 8-H, from which the Toscanini concerts were broadcast for so many years, has long been the subject of much discussion pro and con among listeners and technicians. At the time that the NBC Symphony concerts began, broadcasting was accomplished in studios especially treated for non-resonant acoustic qualities. The orchestral sound from Studio 8-H was notoriously dry and hard, and the reverberation of tone associated with musical climaxes in the concert hall was immediately terminated in this place. Strange as it may seem, Toscanini liked the dry tone of Studio 8-H. There was, he contended, a purity of sound, a transparency and clarity, and always the balance was secure. On the airways, the orchestral tone was often more pleasing to the ear than in the recordings. This was probably owing to the fact that the studio was built for broadcasting and not for concert-hall listening or recording. While to the ears of listeners in the studio the sound was often dull and unresonant, it was ideal with an audience present for broadcasting purposes, where better balance was maintained by a special microphone technique unlike that used in commercial recordings. When the latter were made there was of course no assembled audience.

Toscanini began his series of recordings with his own orchestra in 1938 with his performance of Haydn's *Symphony No. 88*. However, before arriving in this country for the first NBC Symphony concert, Toscanini stopped in London for some concerts with the British Broadcasting Company, at which time his recording

of the Beethoven *Sixth Symphony* was made (now on Victor LP disc LCT-1042). Later, in the spring of 1939, he made his other BBC Symphony performances. While it can be conceded that he may have been cognizant of the finer acoustical qualities of his BBC Symphony records, one can believe that he still cherished those he made with the NBC Symphony — the orchestra that was his very own.

If one visits the home of the Maestro in the Riverdale section of New York, one might be surprised to discover the extent of reproducing equipment which exists there. The house is a large stone edifice with a hall over fifty feet wide and similarly deep, extending two stories—some 30 feet-in height. There is a large staircase at the end of the hall, turning two ways, which leads to the wide balcony which occupies space on three sides. At the front of the balcony are two large cages of singing canaries containing nearly two dozen birds including the nests of recent baby ones. These feathered singers often play a prominent part in music in reproduction. The hall is Toscanini's favorite place to listen. It is his son who manipulates the machines. There are three identical speaker units, built by RCA Victor engineers, in the hall — one on the main floor and two at opposite ends of the balcony at the front. The reproduction emanates from a room below where tape machines, amplifiers and record motors crowd each other for space on the floor. This room is an audio technician's dream of paradise and only Walter Toscanini, who qualifies as an audio technician, knows the intricacies of its features.

(Walter Toscanini — doctor of law and philosophy, formerly a successful publisher in Milan — has been his father's right hand man since the beginning of the war. His importance is not to be ignored as it is he who acts as liaison in all his father's business affairs.)

### *Realism In Sound*

When Toscanini listens he likes the music played as loudly as possible. The three-way speaker system gives him the feeling of being surrounded by the or-

chestra as in the concert hall. Another speaker unit is in the large living room and yet another in the den.

Mounting to the second floor, one enters the Maestro's sanctuary or private apartment on the south side of the house. Here, he has his bedroom, dressingroom, bath and study. In both rooms are especially constructed speaker units besides a small radio for news coverage at his bedside. In a large clothes closet in the study is a turntable unit, and in another closet is a large record file of the conductor's broadcast performances as well as of some of the rehearsals. There is yet another speaker unit in Walter Toscanini's private office. Remote controls permit any performance from tape machine or turntable in the lower room to be played anywhere at any time in the house, and intercommunication between the lower room and the Maestro's study permits conversation between father and son.

In all the bedrooms in the house, there

are radio and television sets. The whole is quite an array of the finest type of technical equipment available today. For a man who is in no way mechanically minded, this proves that Toscanini is a logical human being who makes the most of the benefits of modern scientific advancements. In recent years, the Maestro's recreational moments are spent in front of his television set watching prize fights and wrestling matches. His enthusiasm is often so great that he argues volubly with his favorite opponent.

Toscanini may be most interested in live music, but he has lived intimately with music in reproduction for many years now and has contributed as much as any other modern musician to its advancement. In years to come, his library of concerts and rehearsals will become valuable references to all musicians, and a source to refute any tall tales which may arise regarding the Toscanini legend.

## Some Recent Collectors' Releases

**T**HERE ARE MANY record buyers who welcome the LP collections of artists' selections of former times. Some individual selections on such discs have been unavailable for many years and only procurable at exorbitant prices and in uncertain playing conditions.

The series that Eterna has devised, from different operas or by one artist, could have been far more noteworthy examples of this type of LP disc had heed been paid to achieving the right pitch at which all selections had been originally sung. Unfortunately many are pitched in the LP dubbings at higher or lower keys which is more often than not disturbing to the true quality and character of the singers' voices. Thus, in Eterna's Highlights from Verdi's *Otello* (disc 0-470) Slezak becomes a a bleating, lyric tenor with his voice a tone higher than natural. This record has much to offer — a fine early version of

the *Brindisi* by Pasquale Amato, an equally fine *Credo* by the famous Magini-Coletti, Sammarco's unmatched singing of *Era la notte*, and the *Willow Song* (sung in German) by Meta Seinemeyer. Of these only the *Credo* and the *Willow Song* are on pitch. The Love Duet by Seinemeyer and Pattiera, in which for once a tenor sings softly at the end, and *Si, pel ciel* by a youthfully fervent Zenatello and Amato complete the record. Both duets are a half key too high.

Another Eterna disc 0-463, presenting eight operatic selections by Lilli Lehmann, offers realistic recording, better than in some original discs I have heard. Once again, many selections are pitched a half or whole tone too high. Lehmann's singing is remarkable, considering she was around 60 when she made the recordings, but more for her technical accomplishments than her expressive qualities. The

selections are an aria from Handel's *Joshua*; *Casto diva* and a duet from Bellini's *Norma*; an aria from Meyerbeer's once famous *Robert, the Devil*; *Martern aller Arten* and *Ach, ich liebe* from Mozart's *Il Seraglio*; Donna Anna's "Vengeance" aria from *Don Giovanni*; and *Sempre libera* from Verdi's *La Traviata*.

On other records, Eterna has dubbed "Operatic Recitals" by the Italian tenor, Fernando De Lucia (disc 0-464), and by the noted Italian baritone, Mattia Battistini (disc 0-462). Again the pitch is either up or down a half tone in many arias. Thus De Lucia's famous *Ecco ridente* is a half tone down and *Questa o quella* and *Celeste Aida*, immediately following, are up a half tone. Of course, those who own motors of variable speeds need not worry. It seems to me that even those listeners who haven't an ear for pitch could hardly fail to note the differences in vocal quality.

Eterna's "Excerpts from Act II of Wagner's *Lohengrin*" (disc 0-472) offers the Ortrud-Telramund complete duet from Scene I sung by a famous husband and wife team of the Vienna Opera, Emil Schipper and Maria Olszewska, in which Schipper is the more potent protagonist. The lovely lyric voice of Emmy Bettendorf is heard in the "Song to the Breezes" (this is the only selection dubbed at wrong pitch) and Karin Branzell's early recording of Ortrud's *Entweihle Goetter* followed by Bettendorf and Branzell's early electric recording of the duet between Elsa and Ortrud. These latter selections are beautifully sung. The recording is uneven.

### McCormack and Others

Other Eterna issues of *Operatic Recitals* by John McCormack (10" disc 469), Adamo Didur (12" disc 0-467), Celestina Boninsegna (12" disc 0-468), and noted Wagnerian baritones — Wilhelm Rhode, Desidor Zador, Josef Schwarz, Josef V. Manowarda, and Michael Bohnen — fluctuate in pitch, as do also the *High-lights* from Goldmark's *The Queen of Sheba* — with such famous singers as Slezak, Selma Kurz, Elsa Bland and Wilhelm Hesch (12" disc 0-473), and the *High-*

*lights* from Halevy's *La Juive* with Mardones, Josef Mann, Hesch, etc. (12" disc 0-475). The last band of this latter disc contains Josef Schwarz's famous recording of *Kol Nidre*.

Perhaps the most offending release of this kind is the Esoteric LP dubbing of early recordings by Claudia Muzio (12" disc ES-508), in which the soprano's voice is pitched from one to one and half tones too high in all the arias. This not only destroys the natural timbre of her voice but makes it sound unpleasantly thin and fluty. In future times, such records as this will come under the heading of "careless crimes in LP engineering." It does seem to us that someone with a musical ear could be consulted to prevent such distortions.

### Recent IRCC Issues

Recent re-recordings by the International Record Collectors' Club (318 Reservoir Ave., Bridgeport 6, Conn.) include acoustics by Berta Kuirina, Carmen Melis and Marcella Sembrich and Fritz Scheff. In the case of the latter, IRCC has dubbed a scene from *Faust* by Scheff and scenes from *La Fille de Regiment* by Sembrich from old cylinders made in the wings of the Metropolitan in 1903 on an old Edison machine (disc 170). The sounds are not too clear and the accompanying noise of the cylinder surfaces are a bit disconcerting, yet one acquires an idea of Scheff's lovely singing at the end of the Garden scene in *Faust*. Kuirina possessed an opulent voice and her *Casto diva* sung in German, complete with chorus (disc 3114) reveals her stylistic artistry and beauty of tone. This is a very fine dubbing. The Melis selections from *Zaza*, a role she created, were taken from old cylinders and not as satisfactory as some of her later Fonotipia recordings. IRCC has also issued two electrical recordings by Dusolina Giannini — a setting of *Psalm 94* by Ernest Bloch (with piano) and *Suicidio* from *La Gioconda* (disc 3115). The latter with orchestra, though pitched a half tone down, offers the better singing, yet in both the dramatic intensity and keenly perceptive artistry of the soprano is noted.

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## Book Review

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**MAKE MUSIC LIVE** (Handbook of Quality Home Sound Reproduction) by Irving Greene, James R. Radcliffe, Robert Scharff. Medill McBride Co., Inc., New York. 256 pp. \$4.50.

▲ Lucky music listener of 1952! He can buy record reproducing equipment, at a variety of prices, and of quality that would have been considered fabulous in the pre-war 1930s. And now he can get a sure guide to purchase and assembly of such equipment into complete, home music systems. For here come the Messrs. Greene, Radcliffe and Scharff with comprehensive, straightforward information on what makes phonograph equipment go, what to look for in buying the various units, and all the other facts that the non-technically-minded listener needs for a successful invasion of the land of "high fidelity." Their book is easily the best and most complete one to date for the beginner in quest of musical excitement through home-assembled or custom-built hi-fi.

The authors make clear the reasons for the many-times-over growth of the hi-fi hobby and business since the end of the war. This reviewer has carried from home to home a "junk box" filled with mute evidence of the painful search for quality reproduction of 15 and 18 years ago: home-made pickups and arms, transformers that have been soldered into innumerable amplifiers, loudspeakers with altered suspensions, etc., etc. Reading *Make Music Live* gives a fresh, complete picture of how far we have left behind those frustrating days. A stunning variety of truly high-quality units is now available at any audio supplier. And new equipment is appearing on the market at a giddy pace, in many instances embodying radically new technical features. After parching in the drought of the 1930s, we are nearly swept away in the flood of the early 1950s.

This book provides an authoritative guide, for the neophyte, through this bewildering and indeed, dangerous, rich-

ness. For as the authors truly point out, it is still possible to spend very large sums of money without getting satisfactory reproduction. They begin with the fundamental requirements of high quality sound reproduction, and then take up in turn the major units: record player, radio tuner, amplifier, and loudspeaker. They tell how to build proper loudspeaker enclosures, and assess the merits of the various enclosures on the market. Particularly valuable are the descriptions of typical complete systems, including a "bookshelf" system for the small apartment. A chapter on construction and finishing of wood cabinets and enclosures will give many readers the information they need to house their equipment exactly according to their own needs and preferences.

The authors know the latest technical practices, and their advice is sound and always directed towards assuring the best reproduction quality. They have been generally, if not always, successful in the ever hazardous task of putting technical information into language that is both simple and true. A few points deserve some comment.

The explanation of pickup tangency on page 30 seems unnecessarily confusing: "the measure of *tangency* refers to the position of the *arm* but tracking error applies to the position of the *stylus*" is a misleading distinction because tracking error *is* a measure of tangency, or lack of it. All tracking and tangency questions are referred to the axis of motion of the stylus; the position of the *arm* doesn't enter.

A fact about turntables might be added to the good discussion on page 43: the effect of flutter, or high-frequency "wow", in producing distortion similar to amplifier distortion in effect. With the great march toward "cleanness" in other parts of the system, distortion from turntable flutter is becoming of real importance.

For the round-up on the surface noise problem, page 76, a pertinent additional fact is the effectiveness of flat response (lack of peaks) in reducing surface noise. As the authors say, good modern vinylite

—(Continued on page 355)

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# Record Notes and Reviews

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THERE IS IN SOULS a sympathy with sounds, and as the mind is pitched the ear is pleased with melting airs or martial, brisk or grave; some chord in unison with what we hear is touched within us, and the heart replies.

—William Cooper

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## Orchestra

**COPLAND:** *Children's Suite from The Red Pony*; **THOMSON:** *Acadian Songs and Dances from Louisiana Story*; Decca LP disc DL-9616, \$5.85. **COPLAND:** *Our Town*; **THOMSON:** *The Plow That Broke The Plains*; Decca 10" LP disc DL7527, \$4.85. Both played by The Little Orchestra Society conducted by Thomas Scherman.

▲**MOVIE MUSIC** has gained in stature in America ever since the day composers such as Aaron Copland and Virgil Thomson began to try their hands at it. Separated from the visual portion of the whole and arranged for the concert hall, this music still makes a substantial impression for the quality of its workmanship, pictorial allusions, and emotional persuasiveness. Repetition and an episodic character of many sections — even the short ones — seem to be the only faults.

Scherman and The Little Orchestra, as well as Decca, are to be congratulated for giving us a chance to hear these estimable works outside the movie house. It is a pity, however, that the performances are as leaden as they seem to be. The recordings are just barely acceptable when judged by the highest standards.

—C.J.L.

**BORODIN:** *Symphony No. 2 in B minor*; **STRAVINSKY:** *The Fire Bird — Suite*; **Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra** conducted by Antal Dorati. Mercury LP disc MG-50004, \$5.95.

**DEBUSSY:** *Nocturnes*; **BERLIOZ:** *Roman Carnival Overture*; **RAVEL:** *Pavane and Alborado del Grazioso*; **Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra** conducted by Antal Dorati. Mercury LP disc MG-50005, \$5.95.

▲**THE MINNEAPOLIS SYMPHONY** returns to records in the handsomest reproduction it has had to date. The technique is the same as that used by Mercury engineers in the recording of the Chicago Symphony. There is a richness of sound and a realism that is ideally suited to home reproduction, especially on extended-range equipment. The surfaces of the discs heard were smooth and silents Dorati's performances reveal a musical regard for the various works at hand. His music-making is orderly, sometimes a bit calculated, but never abstruse or wanting in expressive feeling. His Borodin is by far the best sounding performance issued to date on domestic records, though he tends to temper the muscular energy and rhythmic thrust that makes for true dramatic excitement in this music. His *Fire Bird*, on the other hand, is a well planned reading, always expressive though not as

richly colored or detailed as the Stokowski version.

In the *Three Nocturnes* of Debussy, Dorati proves himself a sympathetic and understanding exponent of this impressionistic music, though here he is challenged by the Stokowski and Ansermet versions, both made with better orchestras. For ideal balancing of *Sirènes*, the third of the *Nocturnes*, I prefer the Ansermet version which on my equipment offers equally as fine reproduction as the others. In the spirited Berlioz overture, much of the conductor's work conveys calculation, though the playing is clean and bright. In both the tender *Parade* and the virtuosic *Alborado*, Dorati performs with knowing assurance. —P.H.R.

**BRUCKNER:** *Symphony No. 6 in A; Linz Bruckner Symphony Orchestra* conducted by **L. G. Jochum**. Urania LP 7041, \$5.95.

**BRUCKNER:** *Symphony in D minor, Op. Posth. (Youth Symphony); Concert Hall Symphony Orchestra* conducted by **Henk Spruit**. Concert Hall LP 1142, \$5.95.

**SMETANA:** *The Moldau and From Bohemian Fields and Meadows* from the Symphonic Cycle, *My Fatherland*; **Bamberg Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Joseph Keilberth**. Capitol 10" LP L-8166, \$3.85.

▲THE ASSERTION that Bruckner's symphonies bearly hang together and are not formally well integrated is a justifiable criticism by his detractors, yet this composer deserves in many ways the serious consideration and respect that others give him. But Bruckner with his strange composite structure of romance and counterpoint can, because of his redundancy, tax one's concentration. His weakness lies in his "unvarying pattern of four-measure phrases." To give the composer his due, one should read Tovey who treats him with respect. The *Sixth Symphony*, which was not performed in its entirety until after the composer's death, has one of Bruckner's most imposing, religious slow movements and a scherzo in which Tovey finds echoes of Wagner's *Ride of the Valkyries*. It is an

imposing opus which only Bruckner could have penned with its reminders of the organ loft. It is well played and recorded.

The "Youth Symphony" is a work dating from 1869, three years after the composer's *Symphony No. 1*. Bruckner did not favor it and suppressed publication, claiming it was not up to his best standards. Posterity does not agree and rightfully so. For, despite influences of Beethoven, it has lyrical fervor and lively melodic material which make for agreeable listening. Of course, it is too long, but even so it has an overall cheerfulness and lyrical freedom, despite the fact that it bogs down on occasion. The performance has spirit and cordiality but the orchestral playing is lacking in finesse. The recording is live and tonally bright.

Keilberth's performances of the two most familiar symphonic poems by Smetana derives from Telefunken. While generally excellent reproduction, it does not seem to me quite up to the best FDS achievements of this concern. Keilberth, always an admirable conductor, is somewhat defeated by an orchestra that also lacks finesse. These performances are therefore challenged by Szell's (Columbia M-2177) where the orchestral playing is distinguished for better unanimity and clearer and cleaner sound. —P.H.R.

**GRIEG:** *Peer Gynt — Suites Nos. 1 and 2; Boston Pops Orchestra* conducted by **Arthur Fiedler**. RCA Victor 10" LP disc LM-7002, \$4.45.

▲AN ATTRACTIVE recording for tonal beauty and overall clarity, this is one of the best of the Boston Pops' outputs. Fiedler is in fine form, giving expressive performances of the music without undue sentiment in those sections where others overdue same. This seems to me to be the best representation of these popular Grieg suites on LP, and certainly a better buy than the best of the others which are on 12" discs. —J.N.

**HAYDN:** *Symphony No. 92 in G (Oxford); Symphony No. 94 in G (Surprise); Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera* conducted by **Hermann Scherchen**. Westminster LP disc 5137, \$5.95.

**HAYDN:** *Symphony No. 94 in G (Sur-*



prise); **Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Fritz Lehmann**; *Symphony No. 101 in D (Clock)*; **RIAS Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Ferenc Fricsay**. Decca LP disc DL-9617, \$5.85.

▲THE RECORDING of Westminster is gratifyingly realistic with wide dynamic range (including true *pianissimi*) and hall resonance. In the Decca disc the best reproduction is obtained from the Berlin Philharmonic; the RIAS Symphony has a drier tonal sound. Neither of these latter have the wide range of dynamics of the Westminster and the quality of sound in both suggests recording made some years back. These performances stem from Deutsche Grammophon discs.

Scherchen's full-bodied Haydn performances with their hearty qualities have set a new standard for assessing the architectural conception of the composer. In the "Oxford" Scherchen moulds his phrases like a sculptor carefully bringing every detail in relief without destroying the line of the whole. This, in my estimation, is one of the conductor's finest Haydn performances. His "Surprise" is also well played though a bit weighty on occasion — especially the Minuet — compared with others (I still favor the Schmidt-Isserstedt version though it is not as well recorded). Lehmann's "Surprise" is a routine performance in comparison, with orchestral playing which is far from tidy. Fricsay with a lesser orchestra gives as fine a reading of the "Clock" as any, carefully detailed and always rhythmically flexible. If it were as well recorded as the Ansermet and Ormandy versions, it would better hold its own.

—P.H.R.

**HAYDN: Sinfonia Concertante in B flat, Op. 84; F. Milde** (oboe), **H. Gehring** (bassoon), **R. Barchet** (violin), **S. Barchet** (cello), **Pro Musica Orchestra**, Stuttgart, conducted by **Rolf Reinhardt**; *Cello Concerto in D, Op. 101* (Original Edition); **Walter Reichart** and the same orchestra. Vox LP disc PL-7390, \$5.95.

▲THE RECORDING has tonal brightness and resonance but suggests a studio

rather than a hall. In the concerto some of the woodwinds seem rather faint and in the sinfonia the solo instruments do not always blend distinctly with the orchestral *tutti*, which is obviously a small ensemble. The performance of the latter is nicely handled with fluent rhythms, but does not have the musical refinement of the Munch version (not as well recorded) once issued on L'Oiseau Lyre 78 rpm discs. Walter Reichart is a capable cellist but lacking in the musical grace and technical proficiency of Janigro (Westminster 5126). The interest in this recording of the cello concerto lies in the fact that it derives from Haydn's original edition which varies somewhat from the one usually played, arranged by Gevaerts. In the opening orchestral *tutti*, Haydn did not employ the solo cello as heard in the Gevaerts' version. There are many passages throughout the score in which Gevaerts made alterations, the nature of which do not seem to me always remiss. Purists may argue differently, but I do not believe their arguments will influence many listeners.

The *Sinfonia Concertante*, which derives from the *concerto grosso*, is one of Haydn's finest mature works. It was written in London in 1792, after his first appearance with the Salomon concerts. It was intended for an orchestra of considerable size, larger, I would say, than that used here. There is no question that Haydn considered its importance equal to his first group of English symphonies. Its technical accomplishments and melodic freshness make it a most engaging opus and one welcomes this LP recording which makes it accessible to so many of the composer's admirers for, as Einstein has said, it is regrettable that this "attractive work... is so seldom heard in public."

—P.H.R.

**KALINNIKOFF: Symphony No. 1 in G minor; State Radio Orchestra of the USSR** conducted by **N. Rachlin**.

Westminster LP disc WL-5136, \$5.95.

▲THIS is a clear, clean reproduction with unusually live acoustics for a radio performance, and some truly lovely solo work especially in the slow movement. The performance shows more musical



perception than most of the work from Russian conductors I have heard of late, though the tendency to seem to stumble onto climaxes is pursued by Rachlin. At that, this is a much better reading of this work than the one by Sevitzy issued by Victor some years back, and the Russian State Radio Orchestra is better organized than was the Indianapolis Symphony.

Kalinnikoff (1866-1901) was a gifted composer of his time whose *First Symphony* was internationally acclaimed in the late 1890s. It is a melodically romantic opus, written in the traditional style and exceptionally well orchestrated. One can forgive the composer his naive and elementary moments which are characteristic of many Russian composers of his period—even Tchaikovsky. The annotator is quite right in his statement that “Kalinnikoff holds a position that is no way inferior to that of his more illustrious colleagues.”

—P.H.R.

**PROKOFIEFF:** *Winter Holiday* (Children's Suite); *State Radio Orchestra of the USSR* conducted by Samuel Samosud; **PEIKO:** *Moldavian Suite*; *Same Orchestra* conducted by N. Rachlin. Westminster LP disc WL-5132, \$5.95.

▲**CLEAR**, brilliant sunlight has fallen onto Russian recording. Earlier orchestral reproduction was clouded and often diffuse. This is as fine reproduction as in the Kalinnikoff symphony. As for the performances, Rachlin is the better musician in my estimation. Samosud, while orderly and thoroughly competent, tends to let his rhythms drag on occasion. But of the two works, Prokofieff's country winter-holiday of a group of boys is the better score, imaginative in its descriptive pattern, skillfully orchestrated, and highly individual though reminiscent in part of other works by the composer. Can one fail to recall, listening to the final march of the boys, the march from his *Three Oranges*? Peiko's suite has a bright and often naive folksy character, with its dancelike themes. Its fourth movement, a Roumanian *Doina*, is a singularly atmospheric piece with quasi-oriental effects.

—P.H.R.

**TCHAIKOVSKY:** *Suite No. 3 in G, Op. 55*; *Concert Hall Symphony Orchestra* conducted by **Walter Goehr**. Concert Hall LP disc CHS-1144, \$5.95.

▲**ONE** of Tchaikovsky's most gracious, imaginative, and brilliant works is at last available in a good recording on LP. Though the orchestral playing is rough in spots and Goehr's tempi occasionally too slow, the conductor's affection for the work, the music itself and the recording are the prominent features of this issue. Those who know only the excellent *Theme and Variations* of this *Third Suite* have a surprise coming. The three movements which precede the final section are good pieces and the *Scherzo* in particular is as fancifully orchestrated as anything Tchaikovsky ever did.

—C.J.L.

## Concerto

**BUSONI:** *Violin Concerto in D, Op. 35a*; **Siegfried Borres** with *Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin* conducted by Arthur Rother; **WOLF-FERRARI:** *Serenade for String Orchestra in E flat*; *Same orchestra* conducted by **Matthieu Lange**. Urania LP disc 7043, \$5.95.

▲**SOME** of Urania's finest recording has come from Radio Berlin and the concerto ranks with the best from this source. The *Serenade* has a wiry string tone and none of the resonant qualities of its companion. The performance of the concerto is competent but hardly inspired. It is a work with which Szigeti has been identified in recent times and his performance has always been a labor of love. Having owned for many years a recording of Szigeti's performance taken off the air, I find Borres' competency far less persuasive than Szigeti's often illuminating artistry. The work, for all its originality, makes no pretence of looking forward and owes much to Beethoven and Brahms. Improvisatory in character, it seems diffuse at times, and as the annotator says requires “constant close attention on the part of the listener.”

As for Wolf-Ferrari's *Serenade*, this is

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youthful music written while the composer was still at the Munich Academy. The best of its four movements are the Scherzo and the Finale, but even these are not representative of the best of his output. A product of 1895, it is definitely dated today. Mr. Lange's performance is forthright but the edgy string tone in the recordings defeats his efforts at coloration.

—P.H.R.

**HAYDN:** *Concerts for Organ and Orchestra — C major* (1756), *C major* (ca. 1760); **Anton Heiller** (organ); **Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Hans Gillesberger** (conductor). Haydn Society LP disc, HSLP 1043, \$5.95.

▲THE HAYDN SOCIETY, has here drawn from complete oblivion two very charming and very slight works. Both are completely of their period — serene, a bit pensive and, in their final movements, given to a grave but joyful movement. They seem more of the period than they do of Haydn and it is only in the slow movements that one recognizes his strong yet elegiac lyricism. Perhaps these concerts would sound a bit more ingratiating on the harpsichord. As it is they are festive but not very lively. Anton Heiller, however, is a fine organist and although I do not think that this music serves him particularly well, he turns in an impeccable job. The Vienna Orchestra provides a background of exquisite *filigree* and the very full recording is particularly kind to the organ.

—D. R.

**KABALEVSKY:** *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 48*; **David Oistrakh** and the **State Orchestra of the USSR** conducted by the composer; **KRENNIKOFF:** *Much Ado About Nothing* (Incidental Music to Shakespeare's comedy); same orchestra conducted by **Alexander Stassevich**. Vanguard LP disc VRS-6002, \$5.95.

▲THERE is a realistic concert hall atmosphere to these recordings, with fine clarity and balance. Oistrakh, one of the foremost living violinists, handles the tricky music of the concerto with deceptive ease and always with ingratiating tonal qualities. The orchestra, under the direction of both conductors, plays well.

Kabalevsky (born 1904) has written a concerto in the traditional style of his 19th-century forerunners. The outer movements are full of bouncing rhythms and brightly eager melodies, while the slow movement exploits romantic sentiment. My friend Louis Kaufman, who played the first American performance of this work, says this "is music of unabashed exuberance," which describes it accurately. For all its formal ingenuity, I cannot however agree with Kaufman that the music owns any depth of meaning. Undeniably, it serves to exploit the soloist advantageously, especially in the concert hall, but I question its lasting appeal in a recording.

Krennikoff (born 1913) has devised an eclectic suite which may be good theatre music but does not suggest Shakespeare to me. It also lacks a sufficiently individual profile and the imagination which sustains enduring listening.

—P.H.R.

**LALO:** *Violin Concerto in F, Op. 20*; **SCHUBERT:** *Rondo in A for Violin and String Orchestra*; **Miriam Solovieff** (violin) with **Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera** conducted by **Henry Swoboda**. Concert Hall LP disc 1143, \$5.95.

▲CONCERT HALL'S recent Viennese recordings have a natural liveness suggestive of a concert hall. These are good examples of the Viennese engineering technique. Miriam Solovieff is a gifted violinist with stylistic refinement and an ingratiating tone. The Lalo concerto, written for Sarasate in 1872, is a gentle product of French romanticism. In its day it made French music history, as its composer was in his time a pioneer of instrumental music. However, it was all too quickly superceded by the more colorful and picturesque *Symphonie Espagnole*, (1873), also written for Sarasate. Though symphonic in character, the violin concerto is a weaker and more sentimental work.

Schubert's *Rondo* is the nearest thing to a concerto that he left us. Its original scoring was for violin and string quartet but some think it best served by a string

orchestra. It comprises two movements, an *Adagio* and an *Allegro giusto*, both of which are melodically ingratiating in the Schubertian manner. To me, this more enduring opus is the chief attraction of this disc, and Solovieff and Swoboda perform it very well indeed. —P.H.R.

**RODRIGO:** *Concerto d'ele for Violin and Orchestra*; Christian Ferras with L'Orchestre de la Societe des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Georges Enesco; **SEMENOFF:** *Double Concerto for Violin, Piano and Orchestra*; Christian Ferras, Pierre Barbizet, same orchestra conducted by the composer. London LP disc LL-546, \$5.95.

▲**JOAQUIN RODRIGO** (born 1902) is one of modern Spain's honored composers. Despite blindness since his third year, this talented musician managed to travel extensively in Europe and profit by his experiences. He studied first in Spain and later at Paris with Dukas. His music is related to de Falla (second period) and Turina, and there are some orchestral effects that recall Dukas. But the music has a definite profile and charm of its own. The spontaneity and good humor of the opening movement with its often brilliant orchestral effects, the expressive lyricism of its slow section, and the vigor and strength of its finale produce a work that is attractive for its pleasant pastoral qualities. The soloist, Christian Ferras, handles his not too easy assignment with technical ease and Georges Enesco suggests admiration of the music in his splendid orchestral direction.

Semenoff, born in Paris in 1917, is quite recognizably Gallic despite his name. A pupil of Honegger's, his style is most eclectic. While Honegger's influence is traceable, I find the spirit of Roussel hangs over much of this rather diffuse and lengthy work. The use of major and minor tonalities at the same time over an ostinato in the first movement, is characteristic of Roussel. But Semenoff conjures a sort of clinging quality, a mistiness and even muddiness, which is the opposite of the cleanness of Roussel. The concerto is very rhapsodic, often poetic.

July, 1952

While the writing is undeniably compact, it is somewhat diffuse at times especially on first acquaintance. The manner in which the composer exploits the character of his solo instruments and balances and blends them together and with the orchestra is admirable workmanship. Without this accomplishment, this work would have been less convincing. Though his music has the interest of unexpectedness, its creative urge is far more intellectual than Rodrigo's. The performance is well enough done but one wishes that the composer had employed Mr. Enesco's talents as leader. Most realistic reproduction in both works. —P.H.R.

**SIBELIUS:** *Violin Concerto in D minor, Op. 47*; Arnold Eidus and the Orchestra Society of Vienna conducted by Frederick Hummel; **BRAHMS:** *Sonata in A major, Op. 100*; Arnold Eidus and Leopold Mittmann (piano). Stradivari LP disc 611, \$5.95.

▲**THE RECORDING** of the concerto suggests that the soloist was placed before a microphone at considerable distance from the orchestra — possibly in another room. The recording of the sonata has truer actuality in the artists' relationship. There is little *rapport* between the conductor and the soloist in the concerto and, while Mr. Eidus confirms our estimation of his artistic prowess, the strident tone of his violin against the mushy tonal quality of the orchestra defeats his purpose to achieve a worthy concerto representation. One admires the performance of the Brahms sonata but it may well be overshadowed in the near future. —P.H.R.

## Chamber Music

**BARTOK:** 44 *Violin Duos*; Victor Aitay and Michael Kuttner (violinists). Bartok Records LP disc BRS-907, \$5.95.

▲**HERE** are all 44 of Bartok's violin duos preserved at last for us all on LP. These remarkable little gems are really a collection of Bartok's folklore findings accumulated through years of traveling among the rural peoples of Ruthenia.

Transylvania, and urban residents of the North African town of Biskra. Completed in 1931, these works contain a large portion of the organic material that was intensively cultivated in the big works of the Hungarian master's last years. Performances and recording are consistently pleasing.

—C.J.L.

**BEETHOVEN:** *Quartet No. 13 in B flat, Op. 130; Barylli String Quartet.*

Westminster LP disc WL-5129, \$5.95.

▲THERE is not a better performance of Beethoven's sublime *B flat quartet* on LP than this new issue, and there is certainly no recording as good. The Barylli Quartet provides an admirably paced reading that is stylistically assured, though the players have rough moments in execution ever so often and they do not follow Beethoven's directions on dynamics with unflinching consistency. These matters keep the issue from being truly memorable. All the same, it is the best *Op. 130* since the Budapesters took a crack at it over fifteen years ago.

—C.J.L.

**BEETHOVEN:** *Sonata in A minor, Op. 23; Sonata in G, Op. 30, No. 3; Max*

Rostal (violin) and Franz Osborn (piano). London LP disc LL-471, \$5.95.

▲THESE two artists are exceptionally well mated; their playing conveys a true rapport. The *A minor Sonata*, neglected for so many years by recorders, comes into its own on LP—three versions to date. Of these, my preference lies with the Franciscotti-Casadesus version because the playing is more consistently ingratiating, especially from the violinist. But Rostal and Osborn hold their own in the *G major* and give us as fine a performance as we have on LP. London's realistic recording serves both artists to advantage. —J.N.

**BEETHOVEN:** *Trio in B flat (Archduke);*

Jean Fournier (violin), Antonio Janigro (cello), Paul Badura-Skoda (piano). Westminster LP disc W-5131, \$5.95.

▲FINE BALANCE and wide-range dynamics make this recording realistic in home reproduction. The performance — an intimately lyrical one — is rhythmically

fluent and beautifully phrased. Some may think of this music in terms of larger tonal quality — the more robust approach of Heifetz, Feuermann and Rubinstein, but those who remember the earlier Thibaud, Cortot, Casals rendition will find the style here much the same. The backbone of the piano trio, as well as the piano quintet, is the keyboard instrument. Surely no one has made us realize its position more significantly than Badura-Skoda who, without usurping undue prominence, tellingly establishes the importance of his part. To this group Beethoven's music is as much a lyrical song as was Schubert's (hear Westminster's recording of Schubert's *Op. 100*). With their youthful ardor and vitality, they make us realize that no one performance of any great work can be regarded as definitive, and admiration can not rightfully be reserved for one performance.

—P.H.R.

**HANDEL:** *Seven Sonatas for Flute and Harpsichord, Op. 1 — No. 1 in E minor;*

*No. 2 in G minor; No. 4 in A minor; No. 5 in G; No. 7 in C; No. 9 in B minor; No. 11 in F; Julius Baker and Sylvia Marlowe. Decca LP set Dx-116, 2 discs, \$11.70.*

▲DECCA'S fine engineering does full justice to the instruments of both artists. Mr. Baker is assuredly one of the greatest flute players of our time. His consistent beauty of tone lends a certain enchantment to these recordings though he does not bring to his playing the delicate nuancing of line of Rene Le Roy, in his prime, and the late George Barrere. But accepting Mr. Baker on his own merits, one realizes his exceptional musical gifts and enjoys his playing. Miss Marlowe with her facile keyboard talent fits her style to the flutist. To listen to seven of Handel's flute sonatas at one sitting is to lose prospectus on the merits of these works — the true charm and delight of their varying movements. Here, one would do to reserve listening to a single record side at a time, else one became spellbound with Baker's flute instead of the music.

A recording like this seems to me a most laudable procedure, for one does not hear too many of these works played often in

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public. The flutist does not appear as soloist as he did in Handel's time. Those who know and admire the violin sonatas of Handel will find the composer wrote equally attractive works for the flute and oboe. In the composer's day, the violin, flute and oboe were interchangeable without doing injury to the various compositions ostensibly written for the different instruments, so all of these chamber works were more widely performed.

—J.N.

**LOPEZ TEJERA:** *Joys and Sorrows of Andalusia*; Luis Maravilla (guitar) and Pepe Valencia (vocalist). Westminster LP disc WL-5135, \$5.95.

▲HERE is a disc that should cause quite a stir among followers of ethnic music and curious music lovers who would like to know how the rest of the Western World got its ideas about Spanish music. Let it be said at once that these pieces of Tejera (taken from the Ballet Pilar Lopez) and the performances they receive are superb and authentically Spanish. Intensely varied in rhythm and tonal color, the music will seem like a fascinating jungle to the sophisticated listener who knows only what he has heard in the local symphony hall or operatic theatre. The titles of the pieces in this collection are as follows: *Variations, Fandango, Night in Santa Cruz, Soleares y Seguiriyas, Judea, Bulerias, Grandina, Tarantos*. Altogether a distinguished issue, superbly recorded. Unfortunately there are no translations.

—C.J.L.

**MOZART:** *Milanese Quartets* — No. 1 in A, K. Anh. 212; No. 2 in B flat, K. Anh. 210; No. 3 in C, K. Anh. 211; No. 4 in E flat, K. Anh. 213; *Barchet Quartet*. Vox LP 7480, \$5.95.

▲WHEN London issued in 1949 the Deutsche Grammophon recordings of these works, played by the Dessauer Quartet, I remarked that while there is a charm of youthful naivete to these compositions, there are few hints of the more purposeful Mozart to come. Einstein lists these quartets a "doubtful works," as "no score in Mozart's hand and no reference to them by Mozart is known," yet he is not unwilling to share Saint-

Foix's feelings that they reveal many characteristic traits of the composer. It is generally agreed that they were written in 1772 while Mozart was in Italy. The quartets are all too brief — the A major has only two movements, while the others have three. Only the C major possesses a true slow section. The performances are praiseworthy and the recording is satisfactory.

—P.H.R.

**MOZART:** *Sonata in C Major* (K. 296); *Sonata in E Minor* (K. 304); *Sonata in G Major* (K. 301); Walter Barylli (violin) Paul Badura-Skoda (piano). Westminster LP disc WL-5130, \$5.95.

▲ONE of the finest pianistic talents to emerge in the past few years has been that of the Viennese, Paul Badura-Skoda. Scheduled to make his American debut next season, his solo recordings so far released have been of a consistently high quality. He here reveals himself to be an ensemble pianist of the first water as well. In collaboration with Mr. Barylli, concertmaster of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, he furnishes sensitive, perceptive performances of these three "Mannheim" sonatas. The violin tone is none too lustrous and there are occasional infelicities of intonation, but the over-all picture is of first-class chamber music playing. The recording is of the usual high grade that one has come to expect of Westminster.

—H.V.N.

**PROKOFIEFF:** *Sonata No. 2 in D Minor* (Op. 14); *Sonata No. 5 in C Major* (Op. 38). Robert Cornman (piano). London LP disc LL 553, \$5.95.

▲PROKOFIEFF is one of the comparatively few top-ranking contemporary composers who writes for the piano with any real comprehension of the nature of the instrument. (His being a pianist of virtuoso stature himself may have something to do with it). But despite the undeniable effectiveness of his keyboard music, there are but a handful of pianists who perform his work with any degree of conviction. To this small and fairly select group may be added the name of Robert Cornman. These are technically solid performances, thoroughly adequate to the rather peculiar demands the composer



makes of the performing artist, but above all they are illuminated by a thorough comprehension of the apparently elusive Prokofieff idiom.

• Both sonatas, particularly No. 5 (far the superior work of the two), come to life splendidly under Mr. Cornman's agile fingers. Acoustically, they are quite adequate. Piano recordings have never been London's long suit, but their recent efforts are markedly superior to their earlier ones.

—H.V.N.

**RAVEL:** *Quartet in F; Paganini Quartet.* RCA Victor 10" LP LM-146, \$4.45.

▲A GENERALLY smooth performance, stylistically adept, and well recorded, but lacking in the more "gracious gesture" of the Pascal's version and the more lustrant sound and intensified musical absorption of the Stuyvesant performance. The latter foursome are fresher and more earnest in their approach, and the individual playing often reveals subtleties in detail that others gloss over. Though a 10" record is not as economical as a 12" one, with another work included, it has the advantage of serving the finale to best advantage as some distortion in reproduction results in crowding the music in the finer grooves at the end of the larger disc.

—P.H.R.

**SERLY:** *Sonata from Solo Violin in Modus Lascivus*; **STRAVINSKY:** *Suite Italienne.* **Frances Magnes** (violin) and **David Garvey** (piano). Bartok Records LP disc BRS-908, \$5.95.

▲TIBOR SERLY'S lengthy sonata in *modus lascivus* (derived from a late medieval scale) abounds with fiendish difficulties and special effects, but it lacks organic coherence and any sort of distinctive expressive profile. Frances Magnes plays the work, as well as the delightful *Suite Italienne* (in the familiar arrangement Stravinsky made for Samuel Dushkin), in thoroughly acceptable style. Excellent recording.

—C.J.L.

**WEBER:** *Grand Duo Concertante, Op. 48; Variations on a Theme, Op. 33;* **Sidney Forrest** (clarinet), **Leonid Hambro** (piano). WCFM LP discs 12, \$5.95.

▲THE GRAND DUO is one of the real show-off pieces in the clarinet repertoire. Consequently it gets lugged out a good deal more often than its musical interest warrants. However, like all of Weber's works, this one is quite melodious and so one can listen to the tunes and disregard the pyrotechnics if one is so inclined. In this case it might be a good idea. Forrest is quite capable but he doesn't succeed in making much of the music. Ulysse Delecluse (Pathe PD 19-20) rather underplays the tricks — no mean feat in this difficult score — and thereby makes it easier to listen to. Forrest, however, is favored with an exceptional partner and an excellent recording.

The theme of the variations is from a forgotten opera, *Silvania*. Before there were autos to ride around in or TV to look at, this is doubtless just the sort of music Uncle George used to execute, assisted by Cousin Bertha at the melodian, during those long Sunday afternoons. It is hopelessly banal banal music, and yet so quietly stupid it is almost lovable. There is a kind of American Gothic nostalgia about it, "gems" from *Silvania* as it were. The performance fits right in with the spirit of the music. Indeed, Uncle George probably sounded much like this: capable and careful and not much more inspired.

—D.R.

## Keyboard

**BACH:** *Preludes and Fugues* (Vol. 1); **Helmut Walcha** (organ). Decca LP set DN-117, 3 discs, \$17.55.

▲ANOTHER issue in the admired series devoted to all of Bach's organ works played by the distinguished Helmut Walcha. To give the reader an idea of the contents of this set we are listing the key of each prelude and fugue and the Peters catalog number: *D* (IV, 3); *G minor* (III,5); *F minor* (II,5); *C* (II,7); *A* (II,3); *C minor* (II,6); *G* (II,2); *A minor* (II,8); *C* (II,1); *B minor* (II,10); and *E flat* (III,1).

Those who are familiar with Bach's preludes and fugues know they contain

some of his most moving and charming music. This set has few dull numbers and is an excellent buy. The recording is first rate and the playing on this occasion is perhaps even livelier and more exciting than anything Walcha — or for that matter anyone else on records — has yet given us. Highly recommended. —C.J.L.

**BEETHOVEN:** *Sonata in F Minor, Op. 57 (Appassionata); Sonata in G Major, Op. 31, No. 1.* Kurt Appelbaum (piano). Westminster LP disc WL 5133. \$5.95.

▲THE LATEST release in the projected complete Beethoven Sonata cycle by Appelbaum, these are completely admirable recordings. There are few pianists now actively performing whom one would sooner entrust with the somewhat herculean task of recording the 32 sonatas of Beethoven than this none too prominent artist. The reasons for his comparative obscurity need not be considered here. One can only say that for sincerity, breadth of conception and all-around kinship for the spirit of Beethoven, Appelbaum brooks few superiors, even among his more highly publicized confreres. This is nowhere near as "impassioned" an "Appassionata," for example, as one is accustomed to receiving from the big-name virtuoso pianists, notably Serkin, but for depth of emotional insight, it would be hard to find its equal.

In view of the general excellence of these performances, it is particularly gratifying that they are given the benefit of a superb studio job, as realistic a representation of piano tone as can be imagined. —H.V.N.

**CHOPIN RECITAL:** *Ballade No. 3 in A Flat Major; Scherzo No. 3 in C Sharp Minor; Fantaisie in F Minor.* Julius Katchen (piano). London LP disc LS-554. \$4.95.

▲THE STEEL-FINGERED young Mr. Katchen, who has already given us such powerfully persuasive renditions of the Brahms *F Minor Sonata* and *Handel Variations*, here directs his efforts to Chopin but, regretfully, with a somewhat lesser degree of effectiveness. The very qualities, in fact, which rendered his Brahms quite memorable are, when

transferred to the pages of Chopin, singularly inappropriate. His rather hard tone and driving style can hardly be reconciled to even the larger Chopin, while his ideas about tempi seem somewhat capricious, although certainly his own affair. Of the three works here assayed, the *Fantaisie* is by far the most impressive. Acoustically, the recordings are thoroughly satisfactory. —H.V.N.

**CHOPIN:** *Sonata in B-Flat Minor; Ballade No. 1 in G Minor; Nocturne in F-Sharp, Op. 15, No. 2; LISZT: Au bord d'une source; Hungarian Rhapsody No. 6.* Vladimir Horowitz (piano). Victor LP disc LM 1235. \$5.45.

▲HERE is superb pianism of the quality one has come to take for granted from this extraordinary artist. There are many who will assign him top ranking among contemporary masters of the keyboard and this reviewer, for one, will not demur. It is to the everlasting credit of Victor that its engineers have done a consistently fine studio job in the Horowitz recordings of the past three or four years. Here, as in all his recent discs, is captured with compelling realism the utterly distinctive Horowitz tone. From the thunderous fortissimi of the first movement of the sonata or the finale of the *Rhapsody*, to the feathery delicacy of the Nocturne or *Au bord d'une source*, all is Horowitz to the life.

Some may find his reading of the Funeral March insufficiently lachrymose, but few will cavil at his projections of the rest of the Chopin, and not even his severest detractors have ever denied the unapproachability of his Liszt performances. Suffice it to say that one finds him here at the very peak of his art, a master executant in recordings that are fully worthy of him. —H.V.N.

**CHOPIN:** *Waltzes; Dinu Lipatti (pianist).* Columbia LP disc ML-4522, \$5.95.

▲THIS is one of the most remarkable performances of Chopin's music ever put on records. It provides one of the few occasions when a listener can get an idea of how Chopin himself must have played these adorable salon pieces. Lipatti

scales down his dynamics, plays in time and in rhythm, eschews any of the customary concert hall barnstorming, and makes the waltzes sound like the brilliant small-scaled works they are. The recording is not all that it should have been under the circumstances, but that should not keep anyone from dipping into these great performances.

—C.J.L.

**MODERN FRENCH AND SPANISH PIANO MUSIC:** *Ronde; Hommage à Rameau* (Debussy); *Gymnopedie No. 3* (Satie); *Canco i dansa No. 1* (Mompou); *Murciana* (Laparra); *Danse from El Amor Brujo* (Fallá); *Sacro-monte* (Turina). **George Copeland** (piano). M-G-M LP disc E-151.

▲**COPELAND**, the French-Spanish "specialist", gives us another group of short pieces in the field to which he has confined himself almost exclusively for his entire career. And specialist though he may be, it must be said that his performances of music in this category have never been conspicuously fine. A pianist of distinctly modest attainments, he is most effective here, as always, in comparatively simple works, where his acutely perceptive feeling for the nature of the music at hand is most apparent. These would include *Hommage a Rameau*, and the Satie, Mompou and Laparra (the latter two both extremely delightful pieces). The Turina is marred by muddiness of execution and the recording as a whole is rather thin and lack-lustre.

—H.V.N.

**MOZART:** *Sonata in B Flat Major* (K. 281); *Sonata in B Flat Major* (K. 570); *Sonata in G Major* (K. 283); *Sonata in C Major* (K. 545). **Jacqueline Blancard** (piano). London LP disc LL259. \$5.95.

▲**THESE** are extremely attractive versions of four Mozart piano sonatas, two of them familiar and two relatively unfamiliar. Miss Blancard plays them with an excellent sense of Mozartean lyricism and London has given her the benefit of an exceptionally fine studio job; one of the most thoroughly satisfying piano recordings to appear on this label, in fact.

July, 1952

Every pianist plays Mozart, of course, but few are as successful as Miss Blancard in convincing one that their Mozartean efforts are a labor of love, rather than a perfunctory chore. Blancard obviously enjoys her Mozart and the feeling is contagious.

—H.V.N.

**SCARLATTI:** *Sonatas, Vol. 2 — Longo* 292, 382, 325, 294, 10, 223, 142, 315; **Kathleen Long** (piano). London 10" LP LS-524, \$4.95.

**SCARLATTI:** *Sonatas, Vol. 3 — Longo* 25, 33, 419, 165, 420, 58, 241, 352, 432, 433, 365, 10; **Fernando Valenti** (harpsichord). Westminster LP disc WL-5139, \$5.95.

▲**THE FACT** that Scarlatti was one of the great clavecinists makes his sonatas rightfully belong to the harpsichordists, but his uncommonly pleasant music can hardly be denied to the pianists. Albert Lockwood, who spent his lifetime compiling a valued book, *Notes on the Literature of the Piano* (now unfortunately out of print) said of Scarlatti: "this immortal child is the Puck of musicians; his music teases, laughs, pretends to weep, all in an ecstasy of pagan freedom." Once under the spell of Scarlatti's "merry scamperings about the keyboard" neither musician nor listener can ever free himself — nor is it likely that either would wish to do so.

Of modern players few have quite caught more persuasively the "impish, elfin character" of Scarlatti's music and "its delicate bravura" than Valenti. His playing is ever rhythmically intriguing, imaginative, with the result no two pieces sound alike. But this has much to do with his handling of his instrument. Those who think they cannot admire the harpsichord should hear a Valenti recording. For those who adhere to the piano, I can recommend Kathleen Long's thoroughly musical absorption with Scarlatti's music, her fastidious playing is esteemable for its lightness and grace, though she does not conjure the wide range of tone of Valenti. There is yet another Scarlatti piano recital, well worth acquiring, by Clara Haskil (Westminster 5072). The London disc has a bright, realistic piano

tone, while the Westminster is exceptional for its varied tonal qualities. —P.H.R.

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## Miscellany

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**BARTOK:** *Three Rondos on Folk Tunes; Roumanian Dances; Lili Krauss* (piano). Decca 10" LP 4011, \$2.50.

**BEETHOVEN:** *Romance No. 1, Op. 40; Romance No. 2, Op. 50; Joseph Fuchs* (violin) with **The Little Orchestra Society** conducted by **Thomas Scherman**. Decca 10" LP 4004, \$2.50.

**LEHAR:** *The Merry Widow — Polpourri; Elfride Troetschel, Walter Ludwig, Willy Hofmann, Valerie Bak, Bavarian State Opera Chorus, Munich Philharmonic Orchestra* conducted by **Edmund Nick**. Decca 10" LP 4001, \$2.50.

**LISZT:** *Hungarian Rhapsodies Nos. 2 and 12; Bavarian Symphony Orchestra* conducted by **Edmund Nick**. Decca 10" LP 4000, \$2.50.

**MENDELSSOHN:** *A Midsummer Night's Dream — Overture; Berlin Phil. Orchestra* conducted by **Ferenc Fricsay**; **WEBER:** *Oberon — Overture*; Same orchestra conducted by **Eugen Jochum**. Decca LP 4006, \$2.50.

**ROSSINI:** *Semiramide and Italian Woman in Algiers — Overtures; Berlin Phil. Orchestra* conducted by **Ferenc Fricsay**. Decca 10" LP 4010, \$2.50.

**STRAUSS, Joh.:** *Blue Danube Waltz; Weiner Blut Waltz; Berlin Phil. Orchestra* conducted by **Mr. Fricsay**. Decca 10" LP disc 4009, \$2.50.

**RENATA TEBALDI SINGS:** *La Boheme — Mi chiamano Mimi and Addio* (Puccini); *Andrea Chenier — La mamma morie* (Giordano); *La Wally — Ebben, ne andro lontano* (Catalani). Decca 10" LP 4005, \$2.50.

**OPERATIC ARIAS** played by **Camarata and his Orchestra:** *Aida — Celeste Aida and Nume, custode e vindice* (Verdi); *Carmen — Flower Song* (Bizet); *Louise — Depuis le jour* (Charpentier)

(Decca 10" LP 4008); **PUCCINI ARIAS** by same: *Mme. Butterfly — Un bel di; Gianni Schicchi — O mio babbino caro; La Bohème — Musetta's Waltz Song and Che gelida manina* (Decca LP 4007). \$2.50 each.

**STRAUSS, Joh.:** *Blue Danube Waltz; Tales From Vienna Woods; Philadelphia Orchestra* conducted by **Eugene Ormandy**. Columbia 10" LP AAL-13, \$2.85.

**WEINBERGER:** *Polka and Fugue from Schwanda; STRAUSS: Dance of Seven Veils from Salome; Philadelphia Orchestra* conducted by **Mr. Ormandy**. Columbia 10" LP AAL-12, \$2.85.

▲THE FIRST TEN discs are the beginning of a new Decca series of inexpensive LPs. Most of these are taken from Deutsche Grammophon recordings. Miss Krauss' performances of some attractive music by Bartok were originally issued by Parlophone in England before the war. The artist was at her best in these appealing selections. . . It was a good idea to have the gifted Joseph Fuchs record with orchestra the two *Romances* of Beethoven. He plays with appreciable artistry but the orchestral accompaniments are far too heavy-handed. Excellent recording. . . Troetschel is a charming singer and Ludwig is a pleasing tenor. London has a more complete version of *The Merry Widow*. Without the words, the value of this issue is questionable. . . The next four discs offer good recording though some of it is dated. The Liszt *Rhapsodies* do not stand up to more recent ones on records. Fricsay is a gifted conductor whom no one should ignore — his Mendelssohn, Rossini and Johann Strauss are all handsome performances with a knowledgeable use of rhythmic rubati. Jochum's *Oberon Overture* is first-rate but not as well recorded as its companion. While one admires some of the detail work of Fricsay's *Blue Danube* and prefers his overall treatment to the Ormandy version, listed below, it must be said that the playing of the Philadelphia Orchestra and its sound on the record is better than that of the Berlin Philharmonic. . . The recordings, made by Tebaldi, date back some years and do not represent her at her best. She takes too

many rhythmic liberties and often seems uncertain of herself. . . Camerata's lush treatment of a group of well known operatic arias, with violins and other instruments taking the place of the voice, will please listeners who like their operatic music in this manner. They might also be helpful to young singers who aspire to singing with an orchestra. The Philadelphia Orchestra recording of Weinberger's *Polka and Fugue* was made some years back, as were the Strauss Waltzes. All are definitely eclipsed by the newer recording of the *Salome* dance in which Ormandy obtains some sumptuous exotic sounds.

—P.G.

**HEIFETZ PLAYS:** *Carmen Fantasie* (Bizet-Waxman); *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso* (Saint-Saëns); *Zigeunerweisen* (Sarasate); Jascha Heifetz with RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg and Donald Voorhees. RCA Victor 10" LP disc LM-163, \$4.45.

▲SOME marvelous fiddling in the Saint-Saëns and Sarasate. All these were previously issued on 45 rpm. Good transfer.

—J.N.

**HARP MUSIC:** Nicanor Zabeleta (harp). Esoteric LP disc, ES-509, \$5.95.

▲THIS RATHER singular collection is obviously built around both the gifts and the repertoire of the recording artist. These include a very meticulous technique and a taste for the unusual in harp music. The first half of the record is devoted to music by 16th-century Spanish composers: Mudarra's *Fantasy*, some *Popular Variations* by Narvaer, *paraves* by Cabezon and Luis de Milan, a *Romance* by Palero and an anonymous *Villancete*. All of this music, the notes say, was taken from an "ancient volume" published in 1557. It is very pleasant and completely unfamiliar. The harpist plays with a very simple touch and a nice feeling.

The other half of the collection is contemporary: a *Divertissement a l'Espagnole* of Andre Caplet; Pittaluga's *Danza de la Huguera*; *Lolita, la Danseuse*, by Tournier and the *Three Short Pieces*, by Rodolfo Halffter. All of this music, which

sounds rather alike, is of a decidedly pastel character. There is much "effect" on the harp which, while expertly done, leaves one at the end with the desire to say, "so what?". The recording is very true.

—D. R.

**CIRCUS PARADE.** Ringling Bros. & Barnum and Bailey Band, conducted by Merle Evans. Capitol LP disc L-313.

▲THIS is unquestionably the McCoy as far as circus music is concerned, the kind of music, in fact, that you never hear anywhere except at the circus. Little more need be said after one points out that this is, after all, the band of "The Greatest Show on Earth" and that the recording is clear and loud.

—H.V.N.

**SOUSA MARCHES:** Cities Service Band of America, conducted by Paul Lavalie. Victor LP disc LPM-3014.

▲IT SEEMS quite likely that these are the finest recordings of Sousa marches ever made, eliminating from consideration the various "symphonic" versions of the more popular ones which have crept into the Red Seal catalogue from time to time. Sousa marches played by an orchestra are as absurd as Strauss waltzes played by a brass band. You've got to have a band for Sousa, and here is an excellent one, as good a band as could be assembled anywhere at this time. These are fine, spirited performances, in excellent recordings of the slightly less-popular marches, including *Semper Fideles*, *New York Hippodrome*, *Liberty Bell*, *Hands Across the Sea*, *The Thunderer*, *King Cotton*, *Fairest of the Fair* and *The High School Cadets*.

—H.V.N.

## Voice

**BACH:** *Cantata no. 56, Ich will den Kreuzstab gerne tragen*; *Cantata no. 82, Ich habe genug*; Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (basso) with Berlin Motet Singers and Ristenpart Chamber Orchestra conducted by Karl Ristenpart. Decca LP disc DL 9595, \$5.85.

▲BACH'S two celebrated solo cantatas for bass — both meditations on the trials of life and the hope of the hereafter — benefit no less by the neatness of Mr. Fischer-Dieskau's singing than by his penetration of their meaning. His *tempi* in the *Kreuzstab* cantata are especially well chosen. Surely the opening movement is lighted by faith and hope, the burden of the cross carried willingly. The singer is to be thanked for avoiding all suggestion of lugubriousness. And his treatment of the aria *Endlich wird mein Joch* has real exaltation in it. The other available recordings of this cantata are hardly to be compared with this. In the case of *Ich habe genug* there is keener competition, though only at 78 rpm. Hans Hotter has made a superlative recording (English Columbia LX 8719-21) a demonstration of the triumph of sheer interpretative insight over rather unpromising vocal material. In all conscience, Fischer-Dieskau's warm and appealing tone is an advantage at the start, and musically he matches, if he does not cap, Mr. Hotter. Either singer in the almost painfully beautiful aria *Schlumme! ein* provides a rare musical experience. One essential difference between the two performances is the use of the harpsichord in Decca's ensemble and the organ in Columbia's. With so much to be thankful for it may seem ungrateful to point out Fischer-Dieskau's weakness, which is a matter of range. Though billed as a basso he does not like to sing even as low as G, and he makes occasional transpositions. The reproduction is generally good, though I have a feeling the singer was too close to the microphone. —P.L.M.

GERSHWIN: *Porgy and Bess* (Selections). Todd Duncan, Anne Brown, Edward Matthews, Avon Long, etc. The Eve Jessye Choir, The Decca Symphony Orchestra conducted by Alexander Smallens. Decca LP disc DL 8042. \$4.85.

▲THIS is an LP version of the original cast recording of *Porgy and Bess*, issued on 78 (in two volumes) some time after the premiere in October, 1937. It is to be doubted whether any subsequent performance of Gershwin's so-called "folk

opera" (either actual or recorded) has measured up to that of this group. In the title roles, Todd Duncan and Anne Brown gave (and give) deeply moving portrayals, Avon Long's Sportin' Life was an unforgettable figure and the whole production was the one with which Gershwin himself was most closely associated.

This is not, of course, the complete opera, as was the Columbia version issued last year, but the feeling persists that *Porgy and Bess* will survive, if at all, as a collection of rousing good songs, rather than as an integrated art work. The song hits are all here. The recording is definitely dated. —H.V.N.

HAYDN: *Stabat Mater*; A. Felbermayer (soprano), S. Wagner (contralto), W. Kmentt (tenor), O. Wiener (basso), J. Nebois (organ) and Akademie Kammerchor with Vienna Symphony Chamber Orchestra conducted by Hans Gillesberger. Vox LP set PL 7410, two discs, \$11.90.

▲HAYDN is said to have been inspired in the writing of this work by Pergolesi's setting of the same text. There are indeed traces of the influence, but this is a more ambitious composition, extended by considerable textual repetition. The plan of the piece is a series of choruses and solos, each rather long. Needless to say this is well made music, and it is very typical of its creator. Indeed it may be too typical for its own good, for while any one of the arias is attractive in its own right, none seems to stand apart by any outstanding beauties. Perhaps an exception to this is the setting of *Virgo virgine praeclara* for solo quartet and chorus. The introduction to the *Sancta Mater* is especially reminiscent of Pergolesi.

The forces employed in this performance are well calculated to reproduce something of the original effect. The chorus consists of twenty-six voices, the orchestra of nine violins, two violas, one cello, one bass and one bassoon, with an organ as background. The soloists are estimable with the soprano outstanding. She and the bass sing with real vitality; the contralto is on the placid side, the tenor rather too open.

One serious criticism of the informative



notes by H. C. Robbins Landon is that we are left with no text at all in any language, indeed not even the first lines of the various sections. Reference is made to movements by number, but the labels give only *Largo* (tenor and chorus), *Larghetto* (alto), etc. Is it fair to assume that all hearers will know the *Stabat Mater* text from memory?

All in all the reproduction is well enough balanced, though the tone is on the brilliant side. There is not much intimate expression in the performance, but then neither is there in the music. —P.L.M.

**HAYDN:** *Missa Sancti Bernardi de Offida*; Danish Royal Opera Orchestra and Copenhagen Boys and Mens Chorus conducted by **Mogens Woldike**. Haydn Society LP disc HSL-2048, \$5.95.

▲NO ONE will want to miss this unusually attractive disc. One of Haydn's last six masses written in 1796 just after the Austrian master's return from London, this mass (sometimes called the *Heilmesse*) is full of musical and expressive riches. Scored for large orchestra, boys and mens choruses (soloists are drawn from the choruses), it is a joyful affirmation of the Christian faith. Particularly notable are the last two sections — *Sanctus* and *Dona nobis pacem* — both from the viewpoints of harmony and emotional coloration. This excellent performance is faithfully recorded in such a way as to be enormously interesting merely as pure sound. Do not miss it, I repeat. —C.J.L.

**LATIN RHYTHM SONGS:** *Temptation* (Freed-Brown), *Sing to Me*; *Guitar* (Porter); *Lone Star* (Lewis-Stock-Rose); *Beyond the Sea* (Lawrence-Trenet-Lasry); *Brazil* (Russell-Barroso); *Laura* (Mercer-Rankin); **James Melton** (tenor) with RCA Victor Orchestra and Chorus conducted by **Frank Black**. Victor 10" LP LM-150, \$4.45.

**GRACE MOORE SINGS:** *Madama Butterfly* — *Un bel di* (Puccini); *Toxica* — *Vissi d'arte* (Puccini); *Serenade* (Schubert); *Lone Me Forever* (Schert-zinger-Kahn); *What Shall Remain*, *The End Begins*, *Stars In my Eyes*, *Learn How to Lose* (Kreisler-Fields); *Our Song*, *The*

*Whistling Boy* (Kern-Fields); **Grace Moore** with various orchestras and conductors. Decca LP disc DL-9593, \$5.95.

▲MR. MELTON'S singing sounds tired to me, but needless to say he knows how to put over a song especially arranged in the familiar manner of his TV show. Mr. Black is a knowing conductor and Victor engineers have done a good job on the recording. . . The Grace Moore disc is an assembly of records she made many years ago for Decca, mostly given up to songs from moving pictures in which she starred. The dubbing has been expertly handled and the disc should prove a valued souvenir of the artist. Her two operatic selections remind us of the beauty of her high voice. —J.N.

**MUSIC OF THE LITURGY in English** (According to the use of the Episcopal Church) (Recorded under the auspices of the Joint Commission of Church Music in the Chapel of General Theological Seminary of New York); directed by **Ray F. Brown** and **Harold W. Gilbert** with **Andrew Tietjen** at the organ. Columbia LP disc ML4528, \$5.45.

▲THERE is some fine choral singing on this disc. While the purpose of this recording was "to set a standard for the use and interpretation of parts of the official music of the Church for priest, congregation, and choir" as used in the Episcopal Church, the interest in and appeal of this release may well extend to home listeners. There are two Communion Services — one Plainsong and the other written by John Merbecke in 1549 — and the Evening and Morning Prayer Services. Merbecke's Service adheres very closely to principles of good Plainsong. The dignity and beauty of the *Missa Marialis* is assuredly best sustained for most when sung, as here, in the English translation from the Latin, a custom adapted by the Anglican Church one hundred years ago.

The recording suggests the confines of a Cathedral with its resonant qualities. It is clear toned and well balanced. The diction of the singers — students of the



General Theological Seminary of New York — is good and the voices are pleasing with the exception of the cantor whose vocal timbre is too light to sustain the much needed dignity of his part. Mr. Tietjen provides tasteful organ playing.

—J.N.

**RODGERS-HART: *Babes In Arms*.**

Mary Martin and others with chorus and orchestra conducted by Lehman Engel. Columbia LP disc ML 4488. \$5.45.

▲LOVERS of fines show music owe Columbia a rising vote of thanks for its project of older American musicals in complete recordings. The newest in this series is *Babes In Arms*, one of Rodgers' and Hart's very best scores. Aside from the truly great song, *Where or When*, there are no less than nine first-rate numbers in the show, including *My Funny Valentine*, which is currently enjoying considerable popularity. And all are to be found here. You occasionally wish that someone beside Mary Martin would do one of the better songs now and then, but when you try to think of anyone you'd prefer, you can't do it. She's tops in her field. —H.V.N.

**SCHUBERT: *Heimliches Leben*; Tiana**

Lemnitz (soprano) and Michael Raucheisen (piano); *Hoffnung*; *Der Jungling an der Quelle*; *Nachstück*; Karl Erb (tenor) and Hermann Reuter (piano); *Tischlied*; *Tischerlied*; *Der Goldschmiedegeselle*; Wilhelm Strienz (basso) and Raucheisen (piano); SCHUMANN: *Maerzweilchen*; *Schneeglockchen*; Lemnitz and Raucheisen; *Wiegenlied*; *Unter'm Fenster*; *Familienemalde*; Lemnitz, Peter Anders (tenor) and Raucheisen; *Die Kartenlegerin*; *Lust der Sturmnacht*; *Fruhlingssnacht*; Margarete Klose (contralto) and Raucheisen. Urania LP disc URLP 7047, \$5.95.

▲ONCE AGAIN we are in Miss Lemnitz' debt for bringing us interesting and out of the way songs. Of her three solos I liked *Schneeglockchen* best, for in the other two her admirably tasteful singing is marred by a lack of tonal firmness. Karl Erb, whose years by now must be positively patri-

archal, has also found an interesting little piece called *Hoffnung*, but his singing nowadays is almost entirely *staccato*, a fact which proves the undoing of the youth's little apostrophe to the spring. After a more promising start *Nachstück* suffers from the same ailment. Mr. Strienz' three songs are of a more hearty type; there is nothing in them to call for subtlety. The team of Lemnitz and Anders recalls the pre-war recording of some Schumann duets by Lotte Lehmann and Melchior, a performance not helped by inept orchestrations and a ripe operatic manner (Victor M 560). The present performers do not make these mistakes, but they sing rather placidly and do not succeed in striking a spark of life. This is not entirely a matter of slow *tempi*. Miss Klose, though essentially an opera singer, does a neat job of *Die Kartenlegerin* and *Fruhlingssnacht*. The opening of *Lust der Sturmnacht* is a bit out of focus, but in the middle section her tone and line are lovely indeed. The piano is rather weakly recorded in most of the songs, and in one or two there are suggestions of the old vibraphone effect. —P.L.M.

**SCHUMANN: *Dichterliebe*, Op. 48; Walther Ludwig (tenor) and Michael Raucheisen (piano). Decca 10" LP disc DL 7525, \$3.85.**

▲HEREWITH *Dichterliebe* reaches its third LP recording. Of these versions this is the only one sung by the type of voice for which the cycle was intended, a real point in its favor. But there are more reasons for giving it preference. Ludwig's voice, as is well known to collectors, is a fine lyric instrument with more body than we usually find in this lighter type of tone. His conception of the songs, not unnaturally, is lyrical, notable rather for *mezza voce* effects than for the bitterness or strong emotion of the bigger moments. Such songs as *Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen* and *Wenn ich in deine Augen seh*, therefore, are more telling than *Ich grolle nicht* and *Die alten bosen Lieder*. I am grateful to him for his straight tempo in *Die Rose, die Lilie* and for the intimacy of his *Allnachtlich im Traume*. As for Mr. Raucheisen's piano, there are details to

admire in his playing (note the treatment of the bass line in the first song) but he is given the small end of the recording. While the balance is really not bad as such things generally go, it does favor the singer.

All in all this is an admirable and comprehending performance, though hardly one to exhaust the dramatic meaning of the poems. Of rival versions I would rule out Lotte Lehmann and Bruno Walter (Columbia ML 2183) because of the inappropriateness of her voice if not for the inadequate reproduction; and while giving a full measure of admiration to Mack Harrell and George Reeves (Victor LM 29) I would give the award to Ludwig. The qualities of the two performances are in reverse for Harrell excels in the virile rather than the poetic songs. The fine 78 rpm versions of Panzera and Cortot (Victor M 386) and Schiotz and Moore (HMV DB 6270) should not be forgotten — indeed they ought to be considered for Victor's Treasury of Immortal Performances. For complete vocal and musical rightness the Schiotz is still best of all, though Panzera rivals him in imagination.

Decca's surfaces are something less than perfect. For the sake of thoroughness it should be noted that in several places Ludwig alters the vocal line to save himself singing below his good range. —P.L.M.

**SCHUMANN:** *Frauenliebe und Leben*; Elisabeth Höngen (contralto) and Ferdinand Leitner (piano); **LOEWE:** *Edward*; *Der Nock*; Josef Greindl (basso) and Hertha Klust (piano); *Odins Meeresritt*; *Meeresleuchten*; Georg Hann (basso) and Ferdinand Leiter (piano). Decca LP disc DL 9610, \$5.85.

▲AMONG the various recordings of Schumann's cycle made over the years, from the 1910 acoustic of Culp through the LP's of Lehmann, Graf & Ferrier, hardly one is without some point of superiority, yet none I have heard offers the complete answer to the requirements of the songs. Rumor has it that Elena Gerhardt has done *Frauenliebe und Leben* as her last legacy to record collectors, and perhaps she at least will triumph over the difficulties, despite her age. A melancholy

interest now attaches perhaps to the last HMV records made by Elisabeth Schumann, issued, I understand, despite the fact that the artist was not altogether satisfied with the performance. There is no denying that her voice sounds taxed in the heavier songs, but what her imagination did for the cycle is a lesson Miss Höngen might well take to heart. The Metropolitan's contralto has the best of intentions, but one feels that her lack of vocal security interferes with their realization. Fundamentally I would say her trouble is a matter of breathing. At the very end, however, where the vocal line lies easily in her low range, she makes a moving thing of the last two phrases. Mr. Leitner provides rather distant accompaniments.

For anyone interested in Loewe the disc is worth getting, as it presents far and away the best representation of this great balladier on LP. Of the two bassos I prefer Mr. Greindl, who sings *Edward* for the grizzly thing it is and manages the long phrases and trying range of *Der Nock* with unusual success. Mr. Hann tells the story of Odin's ride to the sea in bold broad phrases, and certainly, as Mr. Greindl also knows, there is no harm in dramatizing such ballads out of the lieder frame. But to carry this kind of thing into the almost Schubertian *Meeresleuchten* seems to me questionable. Here the tone is too open and steely. Naturally these big bass voices record powerfully, but the balance in the Greindl songs is quite good. Mr. Leitner, playing for Hann, is again overmodest.

—P.L.M.

**STRAUSS:** *Der Rosenkavalier* — *Finale, Act I* and *Finale, Act III*; Tiana Lemnitz (Feldmarshallin); Georgine von Milinkowic (Octavian), Elfriede Troetschel (Sophie) with Wuertemberg State Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. Decca DL-9606, \$5.85.

▲TIANA LEMNITZ, as the Marschallin, recalls Lotte Lehmann in her prime. Hers is a great artistry imbued with sentient warmth and beauty of tone. I imagine these recordings were accomplished in modern times, as Lemnitz has only

identified herself with the role of the Marschallin in recent years, formerly she sang Octavian and we have recordings of her in this part. There is some care and reticence in her singing which identifies the voice at a later period than her Octavian recordings. United with a lovely voiced Sophie in Elfride Troetschel and an equally impressive Octavian in Georgine von Milinkovic, Lemnitz presents a recorded portrait of the Marschallin which may make record history. I am sure this disc will be a valued one by all who admire the music.

The scenes chosen are the two great finales of *Acts I and III*. The first begins immediately after the Baron's exit, when the Marschallin is saddened and thinks on her years of life and extends to the end of the act. The Act III music begins with Sophie's line, *Mein Gott es war nicht mehr als eine Farce!*, and continues uninterrupted to the end of the opera, with an unnamed baritone singing the lines of Faninal. Leitner's orchestral direction is consistently competent and kindly disposed toward the singers. The quality of the recording is uneven, as the orchestra seems to recede on occasion though in the bigger moments it is quite realistic.—J.N.

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## RCA Victor's Recent "Treasury Series"

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**BEETHOVEN:** *Symphony No. 5, Op. 67;* BBC Sym. Orch. conducted by **Arturo Toscanini**.

**BEETHOVEN:** *Lenore Overture No. 1, Op. 138; Prometheus Overture, Op. 43; Sherzo and Adagio from Quartet, Op. 135;* BBC Sym. Orch. and NBC Sym Orch. conducted by **Arturo Toscanini**. RCA Victor LP disc LCT-1041, \$5.45.

**BEETHOVEN:** *Symphony No. 6 (Pastoral);* BBC Sym. Orch. conducted by **Arturo Toscanini**. RCA Victor LP disc LCT-1042, \$5.45.

**BLOCH:** *Schelomo;* Emanuel Feuermann (cello) with **Leopold Stokow-**

ski and the **Philadelphia Orch.** RCA Victor 10" disc LCT-14, \$4.45.

**MOZART:** *Concerto No. 26, K. 537 (Coronation);* **Wanda Landowska** (piano) with Chamber Orch. conducted by **Walter Goehr**. **HAYDN:** *Concerto in D, Op. 21* **Wanda Landowska** (harp-sichord) with Orch. conducted by **Eugene Bigot**. RCA Victor LCT-1029, \$5.45.

**SCHUBERT:** *Die Schone Müllerin, Op. 25;* **Aksel Schiotz** (tenor) with **Gerald Moore** (piano). RCA Victor LP disc LCT-1048, \$5.45.

**SCHUMANN:** *Carnaval, Op. 9;* **Sergei Rachmaninoff** (piano). RCA Victor 10" LP disc LCT-12, \$4.45.

▲THESE are all LP re-issues of famous 78-rpm recordings previously released by Victor. The Beethoven *Fifth* may be regarded as an engineering feat, getting 30 minutes of music on one side of an LP, but tonally this performance is a disappointment. Toscanini's dramatic intensity in this music is truly thrilling, but the boxed-in sound of the orchestra in NBC's notoriously bad Studio 8-H does not serve the conductor's interests ideally. Moreover, the low level of the LP makes for distortion on some machines. Much better is the reverse side of the disc, though even here the level is not as high as one might have liked. In the case of the *Leonore No. 1* and the Beethoven *Sixth*, made with the BBC Symphony in England, one realizes what acoustic resonance does for a performance — in these the noted conductor is equitably served. Long an admirer of Toscanini's performance of the *Sixth*, I welcome this LP re-issue.

The Feuermann-Stokowski version of Bloch's *Schelomo* is more unpassioned in feeling and vivid in coloration than the more recent Nelsova-Bloch (London LPS-138). It is as much a souvenir of the cellist's poetic eloquence as of Stokowski's incandescent orchestral conducting. Yet the more lyrical poetic qualities of the Nelsova-Bloch version may be rightfully regarded as the manner in which the composer wishes his rhapsody to be performed.

The Landowska performances of the Mozart and Haydn concertos, dating from the 1930s, are excellently dubbed,

though some ticking in surfaces prevails. Where this artist's piano tone in the original 78-rpm discs of the Mozart was disconcertingly hard to some, LP achieves a rightful mellowness and this re-issue definitely becomes the preferred performance of the unjustly neglected "Coronation" concerto. In the Haydn, we have Landowska at her finest at her favorite instrument. This is a most welcome re-issue.

The Danish tenor, Aksel Schiotz, deserves to be represented on LP. While some contend that Schiotz is not as warmly emotional as others, notably Gerhard Hüsch, it must be said that his light, lyrical tenor is better suited to Schubert's Miller, and surely one could not conceive more sensitive musicianship in a singer. Gerald Moore is the perfect accompanist. A modern release, this recording is completely satisfying.

Rachmaninoff's performance of *Car-naval*, was made in 1930 at which time dynamics were hardly as persuasive as they should have been. As a souvenir of a great pianist, this has its attributes, yet it has always seemed to me that this performance was tonally unrepresentative of the performer and unsatisfactory in its tonal gradations. It is surprising what Victor's engineers have been able to do with such an old recording, however, but for all of the pianist's once admired brilliance this re-issue does not mitigate tonal hardness. —P.H.R.

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## Vivaldi's "La Cetra"

(Continued from page 326)

yet the performance of more than three at one sitting may prove disconcerting. One loses a rightful perspective of the quality of the compositions. If anyone were to tell me that Bach made a detailed study of these works, I would not doubt it. Surely, in Vivaldi's time his *Opus 9* must have been regarded as one of his major achievements. For here the use of solo instrument with a full complement of instruments is handled with complete assurance and considerable inspiration. His individual style of

writing — "the idea of contrasting thematic subject matter within a single composition," as the annotator states, "an idea that became important in the century" — is here most engagingly exploited.

Kaufman — who previously discovered Vivaldi's *The Seasons* in Europe, only to learn later that those concertos reposed in the Library of Congress — a fact no one seems to have known — has not been given his just due in this connection. Recently, making a trip to the Library of Congress, Kaufman discovered the neglected manuscripts of Vivaldi's "La Cetra" concertos. He has since performed them in concert and on the radio in Belgium and France with notable success, and has rightfully been acclaimed as one of the finest living performers of Vivaldi's music. —P.H.R.

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## BOOK REVIEW

(Continued from Page 334)

recordings have very low surface noise; to make what is left disappear as if by magic, the listener need only get the peaks out of his whole outfit — often not an easy

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## READERS RECORD EXCHANGE & MART

**RARE VOCALS:** Caruso, Slesak, Pertile, Ros-waenge, Wittrisch, Cebotari, Boninsegna, Muzio, etc. Westhoff, 1451 Clayton, San Francisco, Calif.

**\$10.00** offered for Victor record 35959 "Days of '49," Creator's Band. \$10.00 offered for Ampico piano roll of "Overture Comique," Walter Lethart, 5933 Fischer, Detroit 13, Mich.

**WANTED:** Decca Classical Organ Records — 20110; 20560 (Vierne), 21070 (Ramin). Peter Johnson, 3022 Rodman St., Washington 8, D.C.

**AUCTION** of 78 rpm records of rare acoustic operatics, rare electric operatic sets, chamber music sets, symphonies, concertos, etc. Collection being auctioned for a Music Club. Write for lists to Paul Girard, Room 11, P.O. Bldg., Pelham 65, N.Y.

**WANTED** vocal records Austrian-German Artists Opera, Lieder, Operetta, etc. Period circa 1900-1935. M. Dallet, Apt. 9C, 915 West End Ave., New York 25, N.Y.

job. Loudspeaker peaks in the mid-high range seem to be particularly troublesome in raising the apparent surface noise.

On page 102 the authors apparently say that the bass resonance of a speaker system can be lowered by an enclosure. The open-air or infinite baffle resonance of a speaker is that of the speaker itself and is the lowest that can be achieved with present techniques. This doesn't mean that an enclosure will not often improve the general bass effect, for reasons that the authors make clear.

This is a tiny handful of caveats to stand up against the wealth of fine information in *Make Music Live*. The book can be depended upon to give the beginner in hi-fi all the fundamentals he needs to get real musical satisfaction from his hobby. Again, what a contrast with pre-war! Then, the hobbyist bitten with the "quality" bug had to dig for information into manufacturer's "literature" totally inadequate to his needs, or in the technical literature of professionals who were not often interested in the sound quality problem. Lucky is the record enthusiast of 1952!

—R.S. Lanier

## Recent "Pops" Releases

**Gershwin:** *Rhapsody in Blue*; Leonard Pennario, pianist, with Paul Whiteman and His Orchestra *An American in Paris*; Paul Whiteman and His Orchestra; Capitol P-303, \$4.98.

A surprisingly good rendition of the *Rhapsody*. Surprising because no one would have expected it from Leonard Pennario, a superb musician who has revealed himself only in classic music until now. His version is sound jazz, played to perfection. Whiteman backs him beautifully.

There have been more spectacular recordings of the *American*, notably Toscanini's, and some rousing good ones, like Bernstein's, but Whiteman's is every bit as good and better in one respect—a truer understanding of the jazz elements of the music. Which is not surprising, considering Whiteman's background and experience in that field, and his long cooperation with Gershwin himself—especially in the *Rhapsody*.

Capitol has lavished some of its best engineering on this disc. The *American* is crystal clear; the *Rhapsody* slightly less so but the piano tone has been caught beautifully.

—Enzo Archetti

**Gershwin:** *Girl Crazy*; Mary Martin, Louise Carlyle, Eddie Chappell, with Orchestra and chorus conducted by Lehman Engle; Columbia ML-4475, \$5.45.

▲THE complete musical score. Nearly twenty years have not dimmed the delight of this brash, funny, and enormously ebullient musical. With the incomparable Mary Martin, and the others Columbia has lined up for this presentation, the wonderful score and sprightly lyrics sparkle again. Clear, forward recording, too.

**Moods for Candlelight:** Francis Scott and his Orchestra; Capitol L-304, \$3.98.

▲THESE Scott arrangements of sentimental melodies for a mellow, leisure moment are pleasant and soothing. Numbers like *The Touch of Your Lips*, *It Had To Be You*, and *This Love Of Mine* are clues to the general mood of the record. Clear recording.

**Popular Favorites:** Tony Bennett, Paul Weston, Sammy Kaye, Frankie Laine, Champ Butler, and Johnny Raye; Columbia CL-6205, \$3.00.

▲A collection of favorites that stood at the top of every music survey during the early months of 1952. Included are Johnny Ray's *Cry*, Tony Bennett's *Cold, Cold Heart*, and Frankie Laine's *Jealousy*. Not necessarily a musician's selection of the best. **Holiday for Keys:** Cy Walter at the piano; Columbia CL-6202, \$3.00.

▲VARIATIONS on eight well-known tunes, cocktail-bar style, pleasantly unobtrusive to conversation.

**After Hours with Joe Bushkin:** Joe Bushkin, piano, with Buck Clayton, trumpet; Eddie Safranski and Sid Weiss, bass; and Jo Jones, Columbia CL-6201, \$3.00.

▲ONCE, this was called a jam session; now it's an impromptu session. The difference is in the music. There is less emphasis on strong rhythms, and more on easy-going melodious variations. The effect is a little more relaxing. Neat, clean recording. Some outstanding solo spots by Joe Bushkin and Buck Clayton.

—Enzo Archetti

**Song Hits from Pal Joey, and Of Thee I Sing.** Frankie Carle. Victor LP disc LPM-3083.

Crisp, clean piano versions of the top tunes from these two shows currently being revived on Broadway.

**An Art Tatum Concert.** Columbia LP disc GL-101.

Actual-performance recordings of a 1949 concert in Los Angeles. The florid Tatum style is ever in evidence. Included are old favorites like *Humoresque* & *How High the Moon*, newer specialties like *Tatum-Pole Boogie*.

**Johnny Hodges and his Alto Sax.** Victor LP disc LPT-3000.

Welcome reprints of eight of the swell things that Mr. Alto Sax himself and his small group out of the Ellington band made around 1940 and '41, including the memorable *Things Ain't What They Used to Be* and *Daydream*.

**Classics in Jazz**—Woody Herman. Capitol LP disc H-324.

One of the genuinely creative in jazz is Herman. This set includes many of his best sides made for Capitol in 1948, '49 and '50, including *Tenderly*.

**Al Goodman Plays Dinner Music.** Victor LP disc LPM 3017.

Suitably sweet background music of the type that is becoming a staple article on records. Couple of unbackneyed items here are the waltz from Leo Fall's *Madame Pompadour* and Jerome Kern's early gem, *The Siren's Song*.

**Jerome Kern's Roberta**, featuring Gordon MacRae and Lucille Norman. Capitol LP disc L-334. **Jerome Kern's Roberta**, starring Joan Roberts, Jack Cassidy and others. Columbia LP disc CL-6220.

Competing versions of *Roberta*, released to tie-in with the premiere of the film *Lovely To Look At*, which uses this music. The Capitol seems preferable on two counts: more complete and better sung.

**Dance To the Top Pops.** Ralph Flanagan and his Orchestra. Victor LP disc LPM 3084.

One of the top big bands in an octet of current pop tunes, including such occupants of the Hit Parade as *I'm Yours*, *Kiss of Fire*, *Blacksmith Blues*.

**A Cavalcade of Musical Comedy.** Rise Stevens and Robert Merrill. Victor LP disc LM-102.

Sumptuous presentations reminiscent of the Firestone and Telephone Hour programs. Merrill and Stevens do not condescend to this sort of material, sing it like they meant it.

**Country Classics.** Eddy Arnold. Victor LP disc LPM 3027.

Favorites by The Tennessee Plowboy, no less, currently the big man in the Sadie Hawkins belt.

**Soft Lights, Sweet Trumpet.** Harry James and his Orchestra. Columbia LP disc CL-6207.

The title tells the story here. James is still in as class by himself in the velvety stuff.

**Two Grand.** Whittemore and Lowe. Victor LP disc LM-154.

Rather fussy, ineffective two-piano pop tune arrangements with orchestral background. This not the ideal metier of this duo.

**Sugarbush; How Lovely Cooks the Meat.** Frankie Laine — Doris Day. Columbia 39693.

Adaptations of Josef Marais South African veld songs. *Sugarbush* is a delight, but the other doesn't quite come off.

**Within Your Arms; Raminay!** Jo Stafford. Columbia 39725.

More Stafford — Weston — Lubell collaborations. *Raminay* is a kind of slower *Shrimp Boats*. *Within Your Arms* an Anglicized French song of considerable appeal.

**Star Eyes; Farewell.** Helen O'Connell. Capitol 2090.

*Star Eyes* is a revival of a tune O'Connell made almost a decade ago with Jimmy Dorsey. She sings it exactly the same now as she did then, swoopy and sticky.

**My Girl; Walking In the Sunshine.** Frank Sinatra. Columbia 39726.

Ava's Frankie displays his familiar virtues in numbers which are respectively sweet and hot. Both with the usual Stordahl backgrounds.

**Like the Moon Above You; Roll 'Em.** Harry James & Orch. Columbia 39765.

Former is outstanding for some brilliantly, executed Jewish-Romanian type trumpet work a la *And the Angels Sing*; latter a routine jump number composed by Mary Lou Williams.

**Mayhem; Easy Street.** Billy May & Orch. Capitol 2113.

Another episode in May's virtual one-man crusade to revive the "big band." Not quite so effective as the best of his earlier releases, but flawlessly played and recorded.

**Tell Your Tale, Nightingale; Take My Heart.** Toni Arden. Columbia 39768.

A vocalist of real quality, when Miss Arden sings 'em, she really gives her all, which in this case is plenty. The first is particularly appealing and ideally suited to her.

**Peace In the Valley; Move Over, General Brown.** De Paur's Infantry Chorus. Columbia 39743.

*Peace* is very appealing, in quasi-spiritual style; *Move Over* a more conventional military-type affair.

**Tears; Please Say You Love Me.** Dick Beavers. Capitol 2117.

Beavers seems to be Capitol's answer to Tony Martin. Quality of voice and style are startlingly similar, with a few Eddie Fisher overtones. Inflated arrangements of ordinary tunes.

**Whistle My Love; Johnny.** Gisele MacKenzie. Capitol 2110.

*Whistle*, from the forthcoming Disney *Robin Hood*, is a charming tune and arrangement, nicely done by this up-and-coming artist; *Johnny* a novelty that's pointless.

**Can't Get Out of This Mood; Cling to Me.** Jane Froman. Capitol 2116.

Froman has always been a singer of dignity and "class." She still is in this brace of top-notch numbers. Former is welcome revival of one of the better Jimmy McHugh tunes.

**Botch-a-Me; On the First Warm Day.** Rosemary Clooney. Columbia 39767.

*Botch-a-Me* aims to be another *Come On-a My House*, Italian style, that is. Clooney is cute as a button in it and lightning might just strike twice.

**Bunk House Boogie; Cuban Nightingale.** Mitch Miller and Orch. Columbia 39742.

Strong side is *Bunk House Boogie*, which, although Miller gets top billing, is actually a Ray McKinley vocal on a tune of his own, and very good too. Miller arrangement, featuring Stan Freeman's harpsichord, helps of course.

—Van Norman

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